The ספר הזהר ZOHAR

PRITZKER EDITION

VI

Exodus

Translation and Commentary by

DANIEL C. MATT

ספר הזהר

The

ZOHAR

ספר הזהר

Pritzker Edition

VOLUME SIX

Translation and Commentary by

Daniel C. Matt

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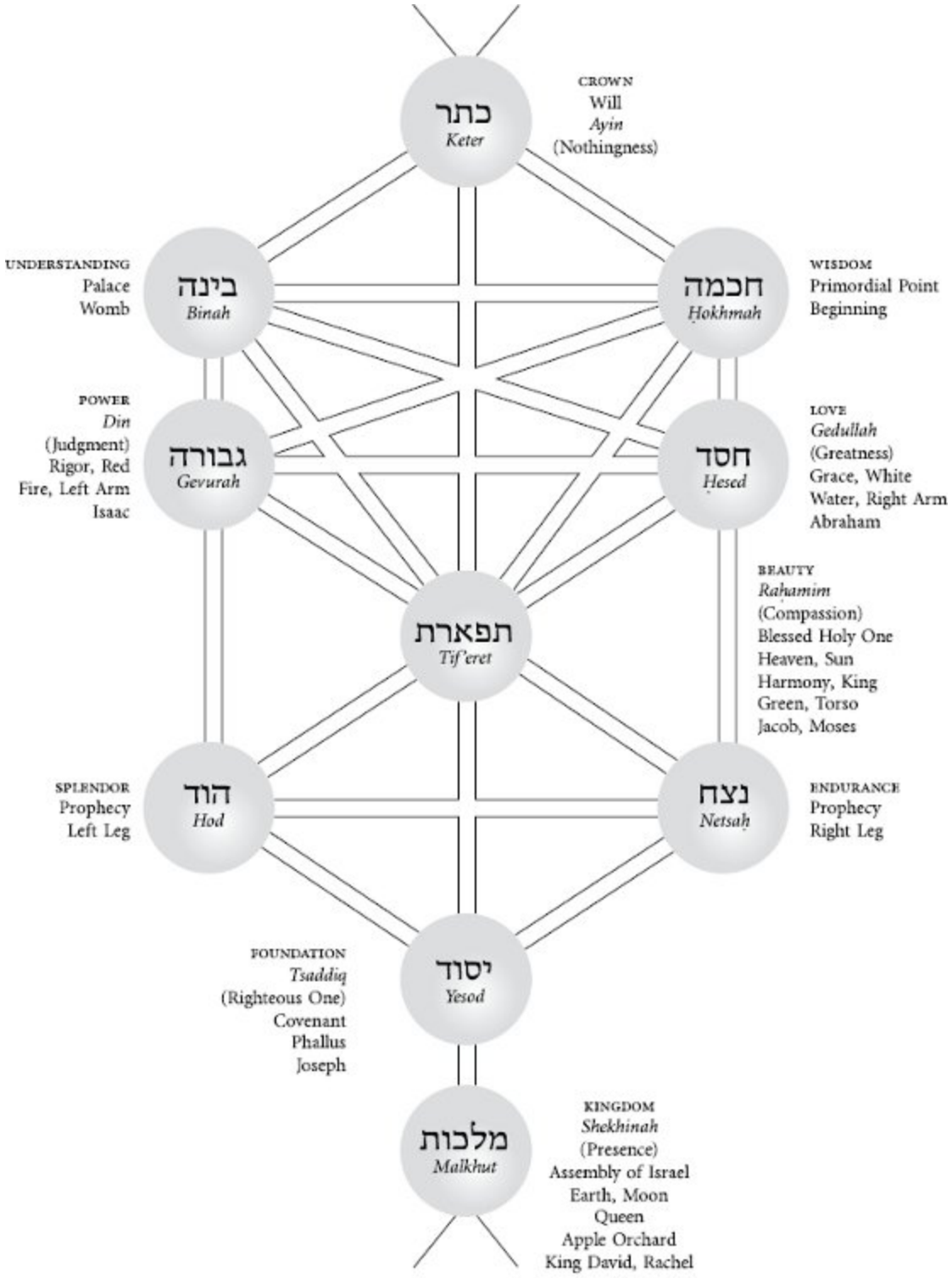

The Ten Sefirot

Preface

This volume completes the *Zohar*'s commentary on the book of Exodus. Some of the volume focuses on the Dwelling (or *mishkan*) built by Moses and the Israelites in the Sinai Desert. The *mishkan* symbolizes *Shekhinah*, the feminine presence of God who "dwells" on earth. The construction of the *mishkan* is intended to ensure Her intimacy with the people—and especially with Moses, who is actually called Her husband.[1]

The dramatic episode of the Golden Calf receives special treatment. The worship of the calf is seen specifically as a rejection of *Shekhinah*. Normally, She would have restrained the wrath of God's masculine aspect and prevented Him from striking Israel; but having been rejected, She instead departed, leaving the people vulnerable. Therefore the blessed Holy One hinted to Moses that it was up to him to defend Israel from divine destruction. By invoking the three patriarchs, Moses pinned God's arms, as it were, and immobilized Him, saving his people.[2]

This volume also includes the *Zohar*'s most famous passage, a moving prayer known as *Berikh shemeih* (Blessed is His name), which was incorporated into the Torah service for Sabbath morning under the influence of Isaac Luria. Remarkably, though, this prayer was actually added to the *Zohar* later (in the sixteenth century), as indicated by its absence in numerous reliable manuscripts.[3]

Professor Ronit Meroz of Tel Aviv University, whose work has dramatically advanced the study of the

manuscripts of the *Zohar*, has generously shared with me the data that she has collected relating to hundreds of these manuscripts, along with her analysis. Her research has provided me with a panoramic perspective of the manuscripts, helping me to determine their reliability. She has also provided me with her list of manuscripts for each *parashah*. For all this, I thank her deeply.

I am grateful as well to Merav Carmeli, who continues to comb Aramaic manuscripts of the *Zohar*, preparing lists of variants. This precious material enables me to establish a critical Aramaic text, upon which this translation is based.

The critical Aramaic text corresponding to the first six volumes of *The Zohar: Pritzker Edition* is available on the website of Stanford University Press. My brother, Rabbi Jonathan Matt, has kindly and meticulously edited a user-friendly version of this text.[4]

D.C.M.

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1. See below, pp. 103–4, n. 128.

2. See below, pp. 74–78, 96–98.

3. See below, pp. 174–75.

4. The site is www.sup.org/zohar. For a description of the various online versions of the critical text, see the website. For my methodology in constructing this text, see the website and Volume 1, Translator's Introduction, pp. xv–xviii.

THE ZOHAR

פרשת תצוה

Parashat Tetsavveh

“YOU SHALL COMMAND” (EXODUS 27:20—30:10)

And you, bring near to you Aaron your brother and his sons with him from the midst of the Children of Israel… (Exodus 28:1).[1]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “What is different here and in all such places, as is written: ואתה (*Ve-attah*), *And you, bring near to you; And you, you shall speak to all who are wise of heart* (Exodus 28:3); *And you, you shall command the Children of Israel* (ibid. 27:20); *And you, take you choice spices* (ibid. 30:23)? Well, all is in supernal mystery, to include *Shekhinah* with him.”[2]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “Upper light and lower light, included as one and called *ve-attah, and you*, as is said: *Ve-attah, And you, enliven them all* (Nehemiah 9:6). Therefore it is not written והקרבת (*Ve-hiqravta*), *And you shall bring near, Aaron your brother;* וצוית (*Ve-tsivvita*), *And you shall command, the Children of Israel;* ודברת (*Ve-dibbarta*), *And you shall speak, to all who are wise of heart*—because at that time the sun dwelt in the moon, and all joined as one to settle upon the artistry of construction.”[3]

Rabbi El’azar said, “From here: *in whom YHVH has given wisdom and understanding* (Exodus 36:1).”[4]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “From here: *And you, you shall speak to all who are wise of heart*, אשר מלאתיו (*asher milletiv*),

him whom I have filled, with a spirit of wisdom (Exodus 28:3). The verse should read אשר מלאתים (*asher milletim*), *them whom I have filled*. However, *asher milletiv, him whom I have filled*—that heart. *Him whom I have filled with a spirit of wisdom*—as is said: *The spirit of YHVH will alight upon him: a spirit of wisdom* (Isaiah 11:2). Therefore, *him whom I have filled with a spirit of wisdom*—for the sun dwelt in the moon in utter fullness. Consequently, all is inscribed in all these places."[5]

Rabbi El'azar said, "If so, this ואתה (*ve-attah*), *and you*—how does it settle in the verses?"[6]

He replied, "Each one of them settles. *And you, bring near to you* (Exodus 28:1)—to unite with him and bring near to him fittingly the mystery of the Holy Name.

"*And you, you shall speak to all who are wise of heart* (Exodus 28:3)—because none of them came to perform the work until the Holy Spirit spoke within them, whispering to them; then they performed.

"*And you, you shall command the Children of Israel* (Exodus 27:20)—the Holy Spirit commanded them, enlightening them to perform the work with perfect intention.

"*And you, take you* (*choice spices*) (Exodus 30:23)—as we have established what is written: *And you, bring near to you* (ibid. 28:1). All these appear here in the making of the Dwelling, for all was performed by this mystery."[7]

He opened, saying, "*And You, YHVH, be not far. My strength, to my aid hasten!* (Psalms 22:20). *And You, YHVH*—all one. *Be not far*—ascending from us, removing upper light from the lower; for when upper light withdraws from the lower, all light darkens, vanishing completely from the world. Consequently, the Temple was destroyed in the days of Jeremiah; and although it was later rebuilt, the light did not return fittingly to its place. Based upon this mystery, the name of that prophet is effective: ירמיהו (*Yirmeyahu*), Jeremiah

—ascension of upper light, ascending above, above, not returning afterward to shine fittingly.[8]

"*Yirmeyahu*, Jeremiah—ascending, not returning to its place; the Temple was destroyed and lights darkened. But ישעיהו (*Yeshayahu*), Isaiah—a name effecting redemption, restoring upper light to its place. *Yeshayahu*, Isaiah—illumining that upper light, bringing redemption, rebuilding the Temple; and all goodness and all lights will return as before. Thus these two prophets stand opposite one another, because the name proves decisive, and the combination of letters with one another causes a phenomenon, either for good or for evil. Based upon this mystery is the permutation of letters of holy names, and letters themselves cause holy mysteries to appear—like the Holy Name, whose letters themselves cause holy mysteries to appear within them.[9]

"First mystery: י (*Yod*), primordial point, [180a] standing upon nine pedestals supporting it. These are stationed in four directions of the world, just as End of Thought, final point, is stationed in four directions of the world—except that this is male and that is female.[10]

"This one stands without a body; and when clothed in a garment, it stands upon nine pedestals in mystery of the letter ם (*final mem*), not circular. Although the letter ס (*samekh*) is circular, assuming a circle, in the mystery of letters engraved in dazzling points above they are square, while below circular.[11]

"This square one assumes the measure of nine points, three on each side; they amount to eight points, and they are nine. These arise from mystery of the Lamp in a square, in nine pedestals for the letter י (*yod*), single point. Those nine are eight, in mystery of the letter ם (*final mem*), square, like this: ⁝⁝ three on each side.[12]

"This is mystery of the letter י (*yod*), single point. And although it is a single point, its shape [includes] a head above and a tip below, and its measure is three points, like

this: ∵. Therefore, expansion to four sides, three in each direction; it is nine and it is eight.[13]

"These are pedestals emerging from mystery of the Lamp to serve as supports for the letter *yod*, and they are called its chariot; they bear no name, only mystery of nine points of the Torah.[14]

"In the mystery of the Book of Adam these nine-that-are-eight were divided into permutations of letters of the Holy Name, to be combined and joined in all those aspects. When these eight-that-are-nine move, they shine with the radiance of the letter ם (final *mem*), square, and it generates eight lights—they are eight, appearing as nine, and they separate below to carry the whole Dwelling.[15]

"They are the permutation of the Holy Name in mystery of seventy-two engraved letters, issuing from mystery of three colors: right, left, and middle. All from mystery of three points, measure of the letter י (*yod*), in four directions ⁘. They are eight points, and they are nine points, and they are twelve supernal points, three in each direction. From here they descend below as twelve in six aspects. When these twelve are engraved in six aspects, they become seventy-two names, mystery of the Holy Name of Seventy-two, a single Holy Name.[16]

"All arises in the Will of Thought, by those pedestals of the letter yod. Therefore letters in their permutations appear in groups of three, in order to arouse the will of the letter *yod*, of three points, as has been said. Thus, ascent of permutation ascends only from the essence and root of mystery of these pedestals supporting the letter *yod*, mystery of the letter ם (final *mem*), square: nine points, eight points, twelve points, seventy-two points. The entire mystery of the Holy Name inheres in the letter yod. All is one mystery, existing in mystery of the Lamp, as has been said, to provide support for every single letter. And those pedestals constitute a chariot for every single letter, as has been said.[17]

“Second mystery: Letter ה (*he*), standing upon five pedestals supporting it, which emerge from mystery of the Lamp, when it is absorbed, ascending above, from mystery of the measure. This letter is called Holy Palace; within, the point that we have mentioned—all in the mystery that we have mentioned: the letter ם (final *mem*), square; but here not inscribed, rather the letter *he* and its chariot, five pedestals that we have mentioned.[18]

“For when radiance of the Lamp struck the letter י (*yod*), it was illumined, and from that strike were formed those nine pedestals that we have mentioned. From the radiance illumining the letter *yod*, three points of *yod* expanded: two above, which are the head, and one below, which is the tip of the *yod*, like this: ∵, as we have mentioned. When they expanded, two became three, one became two; expanding, they became this palace. This palace—after becoming a palace for one primordial point—[180b] became, in hidden concealment, mystery of this letter, standing above five others.[19]

“Four are concealed, and one point standing within, in the middle—they are five, and it is *he*. Just as *he* below stands above four, and it is a point above four, standing in the middle, so here too. As for its standing upon five pedestals, certainly so, for this supernal point has two aspects: one of its own and one hidden.[20]

“In the Book of Mysteries of Enoch: *He* certainly stands upon five pedestals, emerging from the Lamp; then it generates five other pillars and this *he* attains the mystery of ten. When it separates, this *he* stands upon pedestals, which constitute thirteen attributes of Compassion together with one rung added to them. These are twelve, existing six times. They are forty-two—seventy-two they were, but they descend below. Here paths branch in all directions, namely thirty-two. Forty remain, and two ears, right and left, totaling forty-two supernal letters, the large letters of Torah.[21]

“For there are large letters and there are small letters; large letters above and small letters below, and everything below resembles the pattern above. For there are higher holy names, dependent upon spiritual and heartfelt intention, without any speech at all; and there are lower holy names, dependent upon the word and drawn by thoughtful intention.[22]

“There are other names below from that Other Side, side of impurity, and these depend only upon the intention of an act below, raising the intention of that act toward him. For that Other Side prevails only by actions of this world, becoming defiled by them, such as Balaam and those children of the East and all those engrossed in that Other Side.[23]

“These are not dependent on inscribed letters of the twenty-two of Torah except for two, namely ח (*ḥet*) and ק (*qof*), supported by the letters of שקר (*sheqer*), lie, although the former are better known to them. Therefore in *A praise of David* (Psalms 145:1), a ו (*vav*) is written in [the middle of] every single acrostic verse except for these two, which have no *vav*—name of the blessed Holy One.[24]

“Thus, they are forty-two supernal letters, by which the world was created. It turns out that this supernal ה (*he*) amounts to ninety-two—there were ninety, besides two ears, right and left, and your mnemonic is: *Will ninety-year-old Sarah give birth?* (Genesis 17:17); but the total comes to ninety-two. And when the rung of mystery of Covenant is added—which is the eighth firmament, prevailing on the eighth day—there are one hundred. These are surely the hundred blessings on each day, by which Assembly of Israel needs to be adorned. All in the mystery of *he*.[25]

“This ה (*he*) is shaped like two *nuns*, mystery of one hundred. They are five pedestals, chariots, emerging from the Lamp; and they are five others emerging from it. Therefore its shape is like this: ה, two *nuns*—and a point standing in the middle, so ו (*vav*) always stands between

them: נון (*nun*), because here is where it is crowned. Although other mysteries pertain to *he*, this appears in the mysteries of the Book of Enoch, and it is certainly so.[26]

"When arrayed in these fifty alone, it is a point based on mystery of *nun*, like this: ה נון (*he nun*), with one point in the middle, ruling over them, and all is one mystery. Happy are those who know the ways of Torah, to walk in the ways of truth! Happy are they in this world, and happy are they in the world that is coming![27]

"Third mystery: ו (*vav*). This letter is the image of mystery of אדם (*Adam*), Human, as has been said and established. This letter stands upon twelve chariots, and when they are separated they are twenty-four chariots, included in this letter: expansion of the image of a human being, corresponding to arms, legs, and torso. [181a] Their members are twenty-four—of the arms, legs, and torso, as has been said—but all are concealed in the torso, and the torso inheres in all twenty-four. All those chariots are included in the torso, and because they all are, ו (*vav*) stands —one expanse.[28]

"One body comprised of twenty-four chariots, as follows: the head, of six; the torso, of eighteen. Although all the chariots number twelve in all directions, the body inheres in all; but they are twenty-four—six of the head, namely limbs to conduct the head; eighteen vertebrae, upon which stands the head, mystery of six. Thus, measure of the letter ו (*vav*): the head has a measure of six points, really; the torso, of eighteen. Similarly, all these mysteries are explained to be included in the torso, because the arms and legs are in concealment. Therefore all is included in mystery of the image of *vav*.[29]

"When the perfection of this letter is manifested, all evil aspects are shut, withdrawing from the moon, not covering; because it cleaves all windows of heaven and illumines Her, and the Accuser is unable to harm at all. But when it

departs, he ascends, misleads, and seduces, and can denounce all inhabitants of the world; for he is *an old and foolish king* (Ecclesiastes 4:13), as we have established.[30]

"*Vav* is the light illumining the moon. Although many lights are included in it, the light illumining the moon is one expanse, filling Her. It is mystery of א (*alef*), inscribed with all those mysteries. When it illumines the moon, with mystery of *vav* it illumines Her.[31]

"In the Book of Adam, concerning the shapes of the letters: ו (*Vav*), one point above and five points below, and its measure is like this too. Every point is based on the mystery of ten, for you cannot find a point that does not complete ten; for every point contains nine pedestals, chariots, and that point completes ten. The point on the right has nine pedestals, chariots, and it is ten; and so on the left, and so on all sides. Therefore every single one of those points is totality of ten, together with its chariots; and all of them are included in that expansion of the letter *vav*.[32]

"When the sun enters the moon, from this ו (*vav*) issues one expanse, mystery of Covenant, like this: ג (*gimel*), and this is to enter the Female. When all is included in this expanse of the letter *vav*, then it is poised to join with the Female.[33] This is the mystery written: *And you, bring near to you Aaron your brother*—including the arm with the torso. *And his sons with him* (Exodus 28:1)—all his chariots and pedestals. The left arm is with him, as is written: *Take the Levites* (Numbers 3:45); so that the *vav* includes all in one expanse, becoming one. Thus unity appears here: right, left, and middle; all is one. Thus one expanse is formed, called 'one,' and you find one expanse alone—this is 'one.'[34]

"Final ה (*he*) becomes one body with that point in the middle. *Vav* enters Her, and *vav* is located between two points, one above and one below. Then upper world unites with lower, and it is one, as we have established."[35]

Rabbi El'azar and Rabbi Abba came and kissed his hands. Rabbi Abba wept, and said, "Woe when the sun is

gathered and the world darkens!”[36]

Rabbi El’azar said, “Legs below, in mystery of the letter *vav*—how do we know they are included in this letter?”[37]

He replied, “As is written: *Remember the Torah of Moses My servant* (Malachi 3:22)—it is not written *My prophet*, to indicate that all is included in mystery of *vav*, and the letter *vav* is one alone, one expanse, as has been said.”[38]

And you, bring near to you Aaron your brother (Exodus 28:1).

Rabbi Shim’on said, “Moses did not join conjugally with the moon until he comprised all aspects, in mystery of ו (*vav*), as we have established. Come and see what is written: *from the midst of the Children of Israel to be priests to Me* (Exodus 28:1). It is not written לכהן (*le-khahen*), *to be priests, to Me*, but rather, לכהנו (*le-khahano*)—for His conjugal union, for the union of this letter, for His union surely! *To Me*—the letter ה (*he*), so that *vav* would enter and join he, so that all would be one. Happy are Israel, [181b] who have entered and emerged, and know the mysterious ways of Torah, so as to walk the path of truth![39]

“*From the midst of the Children of Israel*. Why *from the midst of the Children of Israel*? Well, nothing is drawn near to be fittingly one except *from the midst of the Children of Israel*. For *the Children of Israel* exist below to open ways, to illumine paths, to kindle lamps, and to draw everything from below above, so that all will be one. Therefore it is written: *You, cleaving to YHVH your God, are alive every one of you today!* (Deuteronomy 4:4).”[40]

And you, bring near to you Aaron your brother (Exodus 28:1).

Rabbi El’azar said, “All is bringing near—for one who knows how to unify and to serve his Lord; for when an offering is found to be fitting, all is drawn near as one and

radiance of the Face appears. But when an offering is not found to be fitting or unification is unfit, then the Face is sad, radiance absent, the moon is covered, and the Other Side reigns."[41]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "The blessed Holy One did not test Job nor bring him to a test as He did with other righteous people, for it is not written of him *God tested Job*, as is written of Abraham *God tested Abraham* (Genesis 22:1). The latter, with his own hands, offered his only son to Him; whereas Job did not give or deliver Him anything, nor was he told to. Rather, he was delivered into the hand of the Accuser through the judgment of the blessed Holy One; for He aroused that Accuser against him, which [the Accuser] himself did not request. Constantly that Accuser comes to arouse [judgment] against human beings, but here the blessed Holy One aroused [the Accuser] against him, as is written: *Have you noticed My servant Job?* (Job 1:8). But this is a deep mystery."[42]

He opened, saying, "*It happened at the end of days that Cain brought from the fruit of the soil an offering to YHVH* (Genesis 4:3). *It happened* מִקְצֵ֣ ימִים (*mi-qets yamim*), *at the end of days*. It is a mystery: *mi-qets yamim* and not מִקְצֵ֣ ימִין (*mi-qets yamin*), *at the end of the right*. He rejected *end of the right* and drew near *end of days*. And we have established what is written: *As for you, go on till the end* (Daniel 12:13). The blessed Holy One said to Daniel, *As for you, go on till the end*. He asked, 'To which end: קֵ֣ץ הַיָּמִ֔ים (*qets ha-yamim*), end of days, or קֵ֣ץ הַיָּמִ֔ין (*qets ha-yamin*), end of the right?' Finally He told him, 'לְקֵ֣ץ הַיָּמִ֔ין (*Le-qets ha-yamin*), *at the end of the right.*' This is what David feared, as is written: *Let me know, YHVH, my end* (Psalms 39:5)—whether end of days or end of the right. And here, what is written? *It happened at the end of days* (Genesis 4:3)—not *at the end of the right*. Therefore, his offering was not accepted, being from the Other Side entirely.[43]

“Come and see what is written: *And Abel, he too brought* (Genesis 4:4). Why *he too?* To amplify everything, one with the other. The entire offering and its essence was for the blessed Holy One, while he gave a portion to the Other Side, as is said: *and from their fat* (ibid.). Cain, however, provided the essence to *the end of days*, and gave a portion to the blessed Holy One; therefore he and his offering were rejected.[44]

“Of Job, what is written? *His sons used to hold a feast…. When the days of feasting had run their course… they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink* [*with them*] (Job 1:4–5)—this is the essence for the Other Side.[45] Afterward he offered ascent offerings, and an ascent offering is male, not female, rising above; he did not bring an offering inclusively.[46]

“Come and see: Had he given a portion to all, the Accuser could not have prevailed against him later. Now, you might ask, ‘Why did the blessed Holy One harm him?’ Well, because he caused the light to be covered and concealed, and did not bring another offering, sustaining others—only an ascent offering, rising above. Therefore it is written: *This Job did continually* (Job 1:5). For if the Other Side had been nourished with a portion, he would have been removed from the Temple and withdrawn, and the side of Holiness would have ascended higher and higher.[47]

“But he did not want another to be nourished by his offering, so he removed himself from him. How do we know? As is written: *and shunning evil* (Job 1:1). Therefore he always brought an ascent offering, from which the Other Side never derives pleasure; so everything that he later took was his to take. Thus Job caused foreskin to cover the sealed covenant, from which it did not depart; and consequently the blessed Holy One aroused that Accuser, as is written: *Have you noticed My servant Job?* (ibid., 8).[48]

“Come and see: When the blessed Holy One wished [182a] to unite with Israel, the time was not ripe because

foreskin covered the light—until that Accuser took what was his from Job. Therefore the blessed Holy One commanded that it be eaten in haste, for that Other Side was engaged with Job, and He commanded them to remove foreskin. Then the blessed Holy One united with Israel, and that Other Side separated from holiness, engaging with Job and taking what was his. Then, *It is a passover offering to YHVH* (Exodus 12:11). For until now, it was not *a passover offering to YHVH*. Happy are they who unify their Lord fittingly!”[49]

“It is written: *No molten gods shall you make for yourself* (Exodus 34:17), and it is written: *The Festival of matsot you shall keep* (ibid., 18). What does this have to do with that? Well, they have established as follows: Whoever eats חמץ (*ḥamets*), leavened stuff, on Passover, it is as if he fashions an idol to worship. For so is the mystery: *ḥamets* on Passover is tantamount to idolatry—it is idolatry![50]

“When Israel went out of Egypt, they left their domain—alien domain, the domain called *ḥamets*, evil bread. That is why idolatry is called so, and this is mystery of the evil impulse, alien worship, also called שאור (*se’or*), leaven. This is the evil impulse, for so it functions in a person, like leaven in dough: entering one’s innards little by little and then increasing, until the whole body is permeated by it. This is idolatry, of which is written *There shall be no alien god in you* (Psalms 81:10)—literally!”[51]

The Festival of matsot you shall keep (Exodus 34:18).

Rabbi Yehudah opened, “*Desist from a human, whose breath is in his nostrils, for of what account is he?* (Isaiah 2:22). This verse has been established, but what is the meaning of *Desist from a human*? Is Scripture warning a person to avoid other people? Then they would act the same toward him, and

consequently people would never approach one another! Rather, they have established this as referring to one who immediately upon rising in the morning goes to the door of his friend to greet him. We, however, have based this upon another verse, as is written: *One who blesses his fellow loudly, rising early in the morning*, [*shall have it reckoned to him as a curse*] (Proverbs 27:14). Although all is fine, still, what is the meaning of *Desist from a human*, אשר נשמה באפו (*asher neshamah be-appo*), *whose breath is in his nostrils*?[52]

"Here the blessed Holy One commands a person and warns him to be wary of those who pervert their ways from good to evil, and defile their souls with that alien defilement. But when the blessed Holy One created the human being, he fashioned him in a supernal image, and breathed into him a holy spirit comprised of three, as they have established: *nefesh, ruaḥ, neshamah*. Highest of all is *neshamah*, for she is a supernal power, by which to know and observe the commandments of the blessed Holy One. If one conducts that holy *neshamah* into alien worship, he defiles her and abandons the worship of his Lord; for these three powers are all one—*nefesh, ruaḥ*, and *neshamah*, participating as one, becoming one, patterned entirely on supernal mystery.[53]

"If we see a person who possesses all these rungs—though his status and identity are still uncertain—how can we determine whether to approach him or avoid him? By his anger he is really known, and recognized for who he is. If, in a moment of anger, he maintains that holy *neshamah*—not uprooting her from her place so as to supplant her with that *alien god*—then this is a fitting human being, this is a servant of his Lord, this is a consummate man. And if that person does not maintain her—uprooting this supernal holiness from its place, to supplant it with the Other Side—then this is surely a person who rebels against his Lord, and it is forbidden to approach him or associate with him. This one is called *he who tears his soul in his anger* (Job 18:4)—

tearing and uprooting his soul on account of his anger, and enabling *an alien god* to dwell within him. Thus it is written: *Desist from a human* אשר נשמה באפו (*asher neshamah be-appo*)—who tears and defiles that holy *neshamah* on account of *appo, his anger*; who exchanges *neshamah* [182b] *for his anger*.[54]

"*For* במה (*va-meh*), *of what, account is he?* (Isaiah 2:22)—this person is accounted an idol. Whoever associates with him or speaks with him is like one who associates with a real idol. Why? Because real idolatry dwells within him. Moreover, he has uprooted supernal holiness from its place and supplanted it with idolatry, *an alien god*. As, regarding *an alien god*, it is written: *Do not turn to the idols* (Leviticus 19:4), it is similarly forbidden to look at his face.[55]

"Now, you might say, 'But what about anger of the sages?' Well, anger of the sages is good in all aspects, for we have learned that Torah is fire, and Torah inflames him, as is written: *'Is not My word like fire?' declares YHVH* (Jeremiah 23:29). Anger of the sages, over words of Torah; anger of the sages, to honor Torah—all in the service of the blessed Holy One. But if over other matters, this is not service of the blessed Holy One; for no other sin committed by a person is real idolatry, and it is forbidden to approach him.[56]

"Now, you might say, 'This was only for a moment, for it passed and then he returned.' Not so! For once he has uprooted the holiness of his soul from himself and from its place, and that *alien god* usurps that place, it entrenches itself and will not leave him. Except when a person purifies himself completely and eradicates it permanently, and then strives to sanctify himself and to draw holiness—then, oh that he could become holy!"[57]

Rabbi Yose said to him, "He really does become holy!"[58]

He replied, "Come and see: When he uproots the holiness of his soul and supplants it with that *alien god*, that person is defiled and called 'impure,' and he defiles whoever approaches him, and that holiness flees from him.

If it has fled once, how much must a person do until it returns to its place!”

He said, “If so, what about all the defiled who are purified?”[59]

He replied, “Any other defilement is different, not being so effective; but this one is unique, defiling the whole body, inside and out, and the soul and everything. Other defilements of the world affect only the outer body. Therefore it is written: *Desist from a human* אשר נשמה באפו (*asher neshamah be-appo*)—who has exchanged the holiness of his Lord for *appo, his anger*; for this is defilement defiling all. *For* במה (*va-meh*), *of what, account is he?* במה (*Bamah*), *a cult site*—idolatry, surely—*he is accounted*.[60]

“Come and see: This is anger—which is idolatry, the Other Side, as we have said—of which a person should beware, from which one should separate. Therefore it is written: *No molten gods shall you make for yourself* (Exodus 34:17). *For yourself*—to harm yourself. And immediately afterward is written: *The Festival of matsot you shall keep* (ibid., 18). *You shall keep*—side of Holiness, which a person should keep and not exchange for the Other Side. If he does exchange it, he becomes defiled, and defiles whoever comes near him.[61]

“*The Festival of matsot* תשמר (*tishmor*), *you shall keep* (Exodus 34:18)—this is a place called שמור (*shamor*), *keep*, and therefore it is written *tishmor, you shall keep*.[62]

“*Seven days you shall eat matsot as I commanded you* (ibid.). *Seven days*—these are not the seven days of *Sukkot*, for those are higher and these are lower. Consequently: on those, complete *Hallel*, whereas on these, incomplete *Hallel*. Since they are below, it is written *Seven days you shall eat matsot*—spelled מצת (*matsot*), deficiently, without a ו (*vav*), for those higher days had not yet settled, mystery of *vav*.[63]

“Now, you might say, ‘Once this Festival of *matsot* has been sanctified, why does it descend? For we have learned:

“One increases in holiness, and does not decrease.” Why does it descend on those lower days?’[64]

“Come and see! It is written: *He shall atone for himself and for his household* (Leviticus 16:6). One who atones must do so for himself, and afterward for his household. Similarly, this rung begins to be sanctified and to emerge in holiness, to atone for itself; and having been sanctified, it must atone for its household and sanctify them. Therefore it descends to sanctify its household. And how does it sanctify them? Through Israel below. Once these are sanctified, we must ascend, for when the house of *Matronita* is sanctified, She ascends to be joined with those higher days [183a] above.[65]

“Therefore we perform the count standing upright, for those days are high days. So too, whenever one enters those higher days, whether in prayer or in praise, he must stand on his feet, thighs and torso as one—for there, thighs and torso—standing like a male powerfully, not like a female who normally sits. Furthermore, out of praise for the upper world.[66]

“Since it is mystery of the male, women are exempt from this counting and only males are obligated, so as to link each one fittingly. Similarly, *All your males shall appear* (Exodus 23:17)—males and not women, because mystery of the covenant is in the male, not in the female; and because the mystery exists above, women are not obligated.[67]

“We have learned a mystery here: that from every seven of these high days, one of these lower days receives holiness; and this lower one is called שבוע (*shavu’a*), a week, being sanctified by שבע (*sheva*), seven, higher days. So it is with every single seven of those fifty days until, but not including, the consummation. And when forty-nine higher days appear, seven days appear below, sanctified by them—each one called *shavu’a*, a week, having entered those seven. Therefore it is written: *Seven whole weeks* תהיינה (*tihyenah*),

shall they be (Leviticus 23:15)—because they are female, Scripture employs a feminine expression.[68]

"When they have been sanctified by them and the house is arranged, so that the Wife may unite with her Husband, then it is called Festival of *Shavu'ot*, Weeks, named after those females who have been sanctified by those higher days settling upon them. Therefore it is written בשבועותיכם (*be-shavu'oteikhem*), *in your* (*Festival of*) *Weeks* (Numbers 28:26)—they are yours—and it is not written בשבועות (*be-shavu'ot*), *in* (*the Festival of*) *Weeks*, because Israel below is also sanctified with them.[69]

"Consequently, when forty-nine days have been reached, that supernal day above them is called the fiftieth day, reigning over forty-nine days—mystery of totality of Torah in forty-nine facets. Then that supernal day, fiftieth day, through arousal from below, generates Torah, entirety of forty-nine facets."[70]

Rabbi El'azar opened, saying, "*Even the bird has found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may set her fledglings*... (Psalms 84:4). *Even the bird has found a house*—birds of heaven, some of whom make their dwelling outside, and some of whom make their dwelling in a house, like *the swallow*, which is a bird that places its dwelling in any person's house and has no fear. Why? Because everyone calls it דרור (*deror*), *swallow*. What is *deror*? Freedom, as is said: *Proclaim deror* (Leviticus 25:10)—*freedom*. This is the bird *deror*, for once it has made its nest in a house and produced young, it dwells in the house with them for fifty days, and afterward they separate from each other, and this is the bird called *deror*, freedom.[71]

"Come and see what is written: *You shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim deror, freedom, in the land* (Leviticus 25:10). From here issues freedom for all; and since freedom issues from it, Torah, issuing from it, is freedom. Therefore it is written: חרות (*ḥarut*), *engraved, upon*

the tablets (Exodus 32:16)—Torah, called חירו (*ḥeiru*), freedom, for what this supernal day generates is called 'freedom,' total freedom. This day is upper freedom, for there is lower freedom—upper ה (*he*), lower *he*; upper freedom, lower freedom; Sabbatical and Jubilee, as one.[72]

"Israel ate two types of bread: one when they came out of Egypt, and one in the desert; one on *Pesaḥ* and one on *Shavu'ot*, as is written: *Look, I am about to rain down bread for you from heaven* (Exodus 16:4). Therefore, the offering on this day is bread, and all other offerings were brought with the bread, since bread is the essence, as is written: *You shall offer with the bread seven unblemished lambs.... From your dwelling places you shall bring two loaves of elevation bread* (Leviticus 23:18, 17). For this is the bread by which Israel gained supernal wisdom of Torah, entering her ways.[73]

"Now one should contemplate: On *Pesaḥ* Israel left the bread called *ḥamets*, leavened stuff, as is written: *No ḥamets, leavened stuff, shall be seen with you* (Exodus 13:7), and similarly: *Whoever eats ḥamets* (ibid. 12:15). [183b] Why? In honor of that bread called *matsah*. Now that Israel had attained higher bread, shouldn't *ḥamets* have been abolished and not been seen at all? Further, this offering was *ḥamets*, as is written: *Semolina they shall be, leavened they shall be baked* (Leviticus 23:17). And further, now on this day the evil impulse was nullified, and Torah, called 'freedom,' appeared.[74]

"This may be compared to a king who had an only son who became ill. One day he craved food. [The royal advisors] said, 'Let the king's son eat this healing food, and until he eats it, no other food or nourishment should be found in the house.' So it was done. Once he had eaten that remedy, they said, 'From now on, he may eat whatever he desires and it cannot harm him.'

"Similarly, when Israel went out of Egypt, they did not know the essence and mystery of faith. The blessed Holy

One said, ‘Let Israel taste a remedy, and until they eat this remedy, no other food should be visible to them.’ Once they had eaten *matsah*, which is a remedy for entering and knowing the mystery of faith, the blessed Holy One said, ‘From now on, *ḥamets* is suitable for them and they may eat it, because it cannot harm them’—especially since on the day of *Shavu’ot* supernal bread is available, a cure for all![75]

“Therefore *ḥamets* is offered to be burnt on the altar, and two other loaves are offered as one, with *ḥamets* burnt between them in fire on the altar, so that it cannot dominate or harm Israel.[76] Consequently, holy Israel cleaves to the blessed Holy One on this day through the remedy of Torah. If the people of Israel preserved these two aspects of bread, they would never be subjected to judgment on the day of Rosh Hashanah, which is the Day of Judgment—and every Day of Judgment is intended only for those who have not taken that healing food, neglecting the remedy in favor of another food, namely *ḥamets*. For on this day of Rosh Hashanah, that *ḥamets* ascends and accuses the person and vilifies him. It stands this day accusing the world, and the blessed Holy One sits in judgment over all, judging the world.[77]

“Therefore when the blessed Holy One gave Torah to Israel, He let them taste the supernal bread of that place, and from that bread they knew and perceived mysteries of Torah, so as to walk in the straight path. Those Companions have already established the matter, regarding these mysteries that we have mentioned.”[78]

Rabbi Shim’on and his son, Rabbi El’azar, were traveling on the road along with Rabbi Abba and Rabbi Yose. As they were going, they came upon an old man who was holding a little boy. Rabbi Shim’on raised his eyes and saw him. He said to Rabbi Abba, “Surely, by this old man new words are about to be ours!”

When they reached him, Rabbi Shim’on said, “You have come with a load strapped to your back. Who are you?”[79]

He replied, “A Jew.”

He said, “Surely, new words are to be ours today!”

He said to him, “Where are you heading?”

He replied, “My abode was among those hermits of the desert, for we have engaged in Torah;[80] and now I have come to civilization, to sit in the shade of the blessed Holy One on the days of this month, the seventh.”[81]

Rabbi Shim’on was delighted, and said, “Let us sit, for surely the blessed Holy One has sent him to us!”

He said to him, “By your life, we shall hear a word from your mouth, of those ancient words that you planted there in the desert, concerning this seventh month! Why did you depart now from the desert to come to civilization?”

The old man replied, “By this question I know that you possess wisdom and your words reach the firmament of wisdom.”

The old man opened, saying, “*And in the desert that you have seen, where* YHVH *your God carried you as a man carries his son*… (Deuteronomy 1:31). This verse should read *And in the desert where* YHVH *your God carried you*. Why *that you have seen*? Well, the blessed Holy One led Israel into the desert—a harsh desert, as is written: *fiery serpents and scorpions*… (ibid. 8:15), a desert harsher than all other deserts of the world. Why? Because at the time when Israel came out [184a] of Egypt and attained the total of six hundred thousand, Holy Kingdom was strengthened, rising over all, and then the wicked kingdom was overthrown and the moon illumined. And the blessed Holy One brought them out to traverse the harsh desert—the place and domain of the serpent, wicked kingdom, his very own—in order to break his strength and power, to crush him and twist his head, so that he would not rule. If Israel had not sinned, the blessed Holy One would have eliminated him from the world. Therefore He made them pass through

his very own inheritance and allotted portion. Since they did sin many times, the serpent bit them, and then was fulfilled *He will bruise you on the head, and you will bruise him in the heel* (Genesis 3:15). Israel struck his head first, but they did not know to be wary of him; then he finally struck them, and they all fell in the desert, and so was fulfilled *you will bruise him in the heel*. For forty years they were smitten by him, corresponding to forty lashes of the court of the law.[82]

"Therefore it is written: *that you have seen*—with their own eyes they saw that master of the desert walking bound before them, and they took his inheritance and portion. How do we know? From what is written: *Then the chiefs of Edom were terrified* (Exodus 15:15)—namely *fiery serpents and scorpions* (Deuteronomy 8:15).[83]

"As for us, we have withdrawn from civilization to the harsh desert, where we study Torah in order to subdue that side. Furthermore, only there does Torah become settled, since there is no light except that which issues from darkness; for when this side is overpowered, the blessed Holy One ascends in glory. There is no worship of the blessed Holy One except from darkness, and there is no good except from evil. When a person enters on knowing an evil way and then abandons it, the blessed Holy One is exalted in His glory. Therefore the perfection of all is good and evil together, ascending subsequently as good; there is no good except that which issues from evil, and by that good the glory of the blessed Holy One is exalted. This is perfect worship.[84]

"As for us, until now we have dwelled there throughout the year in order to subdue that side in the desert. Now that the time has come for worship of the side of Holiness, we have returned to civilization, for that is the site of His worship. Further, now on Rosh Hashanah the time has come for that serpent to demand justice before the blessed

Holy One, and now he rules; so we have left that place and come to civilization."[85]

He opened, saying, "*Blast the shofar on the new moon, on the covering for our festival day* (Psalms 81:4). Now is the time for supernal harsh Judgment to be aroused, and when it is aroused the Other Side is empowered along with it. Once empowered, it rises and covers the moon, which shines no light and is filled from the side of Judgment. Then the world is under Judgment, those above and those below, and a herald proclaims through all the firmaments: 'Prepare the Throne of Judgment for the Master of all, for He is about to judge!'[86]

"Here is a mystery, illuminated for us in the desert. Why is supernal Judgment aroused on this day? Well, all mysteries and all precious holiness depend entirely on the seventh, and from that supernal seventh—supernal world, called the World that is Coming—shine all lamps, all holiness, and all blessings. When the time comes for blessings to be renewed and holiness to shine, it seeks to examine the mending of all worlds—and all those mendings, maintaining all, ascend from those below, if they are fitting. If not, it remains unshining until the wicked are separated from the righteous. Then Judgment is aroused, and from that Judgment the Other Side is empowered, becoming the Accuser, so that those wicked ones may be given to him—for of him is written *Every termination he searches out* (Job 28:3)—and he covers the moon.[87]

"Why? Because the blessed Holy One does not desire to destroy His handiwork. That Other Side exists as a hard shell that cannot be broken, except by the advice given by the blessed Holy One to Israel, as is written: *Blast the shofar on the new moon, on the covering for our festival day* (Psalms 81:4)—in order to break that *covering*, by which the moon is covered and cannot shine. When Israel below arouses the shofar, the sound issuing from it strikes the air,

splitting firmaments until it rises to that mighty rock covering the moon. He perceives and discovers an arousal of Compassion [184b] ascending, then poised above; he is confounded. Then that sound persists and removes Judgment. Once Compassion has been aroused below, so too above: another, supernal shofar is aroused, emitting a sound that is Compassion; and sound meets sound, Compassion meets Compassion. By arousal below, there is similarly arousal above.[88]

"Now, you might say, 'How can a sound below or an arousal below arouse similarly?' Come and see: The lower world is always poised to receive and is called 'precious stone.' And the upper world gives to Her only according to Her state of being. If She displays a radiant face from below, so She is illumined from above; but if She displays sadness, Judgment confronts Her.[89]

"Similarly it is written: *Serve YHVH in joy* (Psalms 100:2)—a person's joy draws another, supernal joy. Thus, just as this lower world is aroused, so She draws from above. Therefore Israel hastens to arouse a sound through the shofar—mystery of Compassion, comprised of fire, water, and air, becoming one. Ascending, it strikes this precious stone, which is imbued with the colors of that sound. Then, according to Her appearance, so She draws from above.[90]

"Once She is arrayed by this sound, Compassion issues from above and settles upon Her, and She is encompassed from below and above. Then the Other Side is confounded: he looks and sees the radiant face and his power weakens and he cannot accuse. And this precious stone displays radiance in every direction, radiance below and radiance above.[91]

"When does She display radiance above? You must say, on Yom Kippur. When Yom Kippur arrives and this precious stone is illumined by radiance above, drawn by radiance below, and that Denouncer is confounded, then Israel

prepares one goat below for that harsh desert over which he rules.[92]

"That Other Side is the central point of the desolate world, for he rules over all desolation and ruin. And the central point of all habitation is the side of Holiness; thus Jerusalem stands in the center of the whole inhabited world.[93]

"The Kingdom of Heaven, side of Holiness, extends between two points: one Her own and one of the World that is Coming, a supernal, hidden point. Thus She is based on two points. Under Her own point stands Jerusalem, center of the whole inhabited world. The point that She takes from Mother—supernal, hidden—is the earthly Garden of Eden, situated in the center of the whole world from all directions: of desolation and habitation, from all directions of the world.[94]

"Thus, in the middle of the Garden of Eden lies one point—hidden, concealed, unknown. One column is inserted within that point, from below to above, and from there gushes water, diverging in four directions of the world.[95]

"So there exist three points in the world, standing one upon the other, like the three points of Torah.[96]

"Come and see: The goat that Israel sends to the desert is in order to give a portion to that Other Side, with which to be occupied. Now, you might say, 'Why two goats here—one for *YHVH* and one for that Other Side? Granted, that goat of the Other Side, but why for *YHVH*?'[97]

"Well, this may be compared to a king who sat in judgment over his son. He summoned the bailiff, who regularly administers punishment, so that he would prepare to punish his son. That bailiff was glad, and entered the king's palace to eat there.

"When his son saw, he said to himself, 'Surely, this bailiff has come into my father's palace only because the king is angry with me.'

“What did he do? He went and reconciled with him.[98] Once he had done so, the king ordered a magnificent feast to be prepared for him and his son, and he ordered that the bailiff should not know of it.

“Afterward, the bailiff entered. The king said to himself, ‘Now if this one knows about the meal [185a] that I have prepared for myself and my son, the table will be disrupted.’

“What did he do? He summoned the butler and told him, ‘Prepare something and place it in front of me and in front of that bailiff, so that he thinks he is dining from my food in my presence, and he won’t know about that precious joyous feast for me and my son; he will take that portion and leave, and withdraw from the joy of our feast.’

“If the king had not done so, that bailiff would not have departed from the king’s palace.

“Therefore the blessed Holy One said, ‘Prepare two goats, one for Me and one for that Denouncer, so that he will think that he is eating from My meal and be unaware of our other joyous feast, and he will take that portion and go on his way and depart from My house.’[99]

“When supernal Mother, the World that is Coming, comes to dwell in the palace of the lower world, She finds a radiant face and no denouncer or opponents in Her presence. Then She emanates all blessings and illumines all, and total joy prevails, and Israel partakes of those blessings. For when the World that is Coming enters the palace of the lower world and finds that lower world rejoicing with its children in that magnificent feast, She blesses the table, and all worlds are blessed, and every joy and every radiant face appear there—as is written: *Before YHVH you will become pure* (Leviticus 16:30).[100]

“It is written: *Aaron shall place lots upon the two goats, one lot for YHVH and one lot for Azazel* (Leviticus 16:8). This is the joy of that Denouncer, for the blessed Holy One casts lots with him and invites him—but he does not know that

blazing fire is cast upon his head and upon his people, as is said: *For you are heaping burning coals on his head* (Proverbs 25:22). Your mnemonic is: *Moreover, Queen Esther let no one but me come with the king to the banquet that she prepared* (Esther 5:12). And it is written: *Haman went out that day happy and merry-hearted* (ibid., 9)—with that portion that he obtained, and he went his way.[101]

"Afterward, when the supernal King comes to the palace of *Matronita*, She pleads before the King for Herself and for Her children. And even when the people of Israel are in exile and they offer prayers every day, She ascends on this day before the supernal King and pleads for Her children. Then all those acts of vengeance that the blessed Holy One intends to inflict upon Edom are decreed, as well as how this Denouncer will be eliminated from the world, as is said: *He will swallow up death forever*… (Isaiah 25:8).[102]

"Your mnemonic is, in the time of exile: *For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, …for the enemy cannot compensate for the damage to the king* (Esther 7:4). What is *the damage to the king*? As is said: *They will wipe out our name from the earth. And what will You do for Your great name*? (Joshua 7:9)—for the supernal Name will no longer endure; this is *the damage to the king*. And then, *Haman cringed in terror before the king and the queen* (Esther 7:6).[103]

"When a radiant face and complete joy appear, and the people of Israel emerges free on that day, then from that day on, joy is openly revealed. For even that Other Side delights in their joy and is transformed into being joyous together with them, because once he sees that he cannot prevail against them, dominating them, he wants to rejoice with them from now on. Just as they gave him a portion so that he would separate from them, so too they give to the other nations, in order that they separate from them below.[104]

“Come and see from that mystery of sacrifice—sacrificing שעיר (*sa’ir*), a goat, and not something else. And why the goat of the new moon, and here a goat? Now if you say because that is his aspect—fine, but why not עז (*ez*), an adult goat?[105]

“However, this particular one is essential, and is common among sorcerers, who perform only with what has not mated with a female. Therefore, *sa’ir*, which has not mated with a female, matches his aspects entirely, whereas *ez* is a male that has mated with a female. Since he is a king, on account of his honor he is given this one, which has not mated with a female nor given its potency to another. This is well known to those sorcerers who perform these acts. Therefore all those sins of theirs are cast upon that *sa’ir*.[106]

“Come and see: Although it is a portion for that side, there is a secret here: All these other sides below are all more impure, and the further that lower rungs descend, the greater their impurity. Consequently, *ez* is more their portion, since its hanging hair [185b] exceeds that of any other animal, just as their judgment hangs down in impurity. But as for this wicked kingdom, king of all on that side, its impurity is more refined, not as completely defiled as these lower ones. Therefore, *sa’ir*, whose hair does not hang and is not smooth. Not smooth, on account of its impurity; not hanging, because its impurity is not as intense as these lower ones. Thus surely, *sa’ir* and nothing else.[107]

“כפור (*Kippur*), Purging. Why is it called *kippur*? Well, because it cleanses all impurity and removes it from before Him on that day. Therefore, Yom Kippur, Day of Cleansing, and so we call it. It is written: *For on this day He will effect purging for you, to purify you* (Leviticus 16:30). The verse should read *For this day* [*will effect purging for you*]; why *on this day*? Well, since the Sanctuary above is purified and cleansed, it is written *For on this day He will effect purging for you*—He will purge and cleanse first *this day*, so that it may be purified, and afterward *for you*.[108]

“Further, *He will effect purging on this day* and cleanse it first. And all this, *for you*—for your sake it must be cleansed and purified first.[109]

“*He will effect purging*. Who *will effect purging*? Well, this is the upper world, who illumines and cleanses all. Therefore, all those evil aspects, called ‘depths of the sea,’ will be eliminated. Just as they are depths of the sea, so the hair of their whole side hangs down, and the hair of that side is not smooth.[110]

“Similarly, *He shall purge the Shrine of the impurities of the Children of Israel and of their transgressions, whatever their sins* (Leviticus 16:16). *He shall purge the Shrine*—the Sanctuary above, for once this is cleansed, all is cleansed.[111]

“*Of the impurities of the Children of Israel and of their transgressions*—fine. What is *whatever their sins*? The verse should read *and all their sins*. However, to benefit them from now on, *whatever their sins*, since the Accuser has no power over them. Therefore, on Yom Kippur, which is the wiping away of all sins and their cleansing, Israel must cleanse themselves and walk cold-footed, like supernal angels.[112]

“Five afflictions, in order to be assisted by five supernal aspects emanated by Yom Kippur, its gates. And if drinking is reckoned, deriving from the side of Isaac, that makes six; although it is included in eating, still there are six. The last affliction is sexual relations, located on the sixth rung, corresponding to which we accept this affliction.[113]

“It is written: ובעשור (*U-ve-asor*), *And on the tenth, of this seventh month* (Numbers 29:7); *Yet* בעשור (*be-asor*), *on the tenth, of this seventh month* (Leviticus 23:27). *Be-asor, on the decuple*—the verse should read בעשירי (*ba-asiri*), *on the tenth*; why *be-asor, on the decuple*? Well, because now, on this day, all supernal rungs come—these upon those—to settle upon the moon and illumine Her, all in mystery of ten, amounting to a hundred. When She attains the mystery of a hundred,

then all is one, and She is called י״ה (*YH*). Therefore, *asor, decuple*—as is said: שמור (*shamor*), *keep* (Deuteronomy 5:12), and זכור (*zakhor*), *remember* (Exodus 20:8)—all coming to multiply tenfold and illumine in mystery of ten."[114]

The old man turned his head toward Rabbi Shim'on. Rabbi Shim'on said to him, "I knew that you would pose a question about this *be-asor, on the tenth, of this seventh month*—surely, *be-asor, on the decuple*. That is fine, and so it is. But why amounting to a hundred? From the verse it seems to amount only to seventy, as implied by what is written: *be-asor, on the decuple, of this seventh month*—when you multiply the seventh by ten, it surely amounts to seventy."[115]

He replied, "That is why I turned my head toward you, for I know that you are wise. Come and see: there are two mysteries here. One is that the moon is called 'the seventh month,' and therefore the seventh month is called *asor, ten*, for She is illumined ten times, totaling a hundred. Further, this word that you spoke: surely amounting to seventy on this day—on the rung of seventy and on the rung of a hundred. On the rung of a hundred, to be consummated and to shine; on the rung of seventy, for on this day She takes the entire people of Israel to be judged, and they all exist in soul more than in body—for on this day that affliction is of the soul, not of the body, as is said: *You shall afflict your souls.... for every soul that is not afflicted* (Leviticus 23:27, 29). This day takes all those souls, and they are under its authority. If it did not abide in mystery of seventy, it would have no authority over souls, since souls exist in mystery [186a] of seventy, as is said: *The days of our lives are seventy years*... (Psalms 90:10).[116]

"Now, you might say, 'As for the souls of children, who have not completed seventy years, She has no sway over them.' Yes, She does, but not as completely as over one who for many days has been privileged to observe the commandments of Torah. Thus She traverses all those

seventy years. Concerning this we have learned: ‘It is all one and the same whether a person does much or little.’ What is ‘one’? Referring to the unification of seventy years—whether a person does much or little.[117]

“Therefore on Yom Kippur She traverses all of them and this rung is completed by all of them, and all souls ascend before Her and She judges them, and the blessed Holy One has compassion for Israel on this day. But whoever does not remove mud from his spirit, purging it on this day, when his prayer ascends on this day it sinks into the place called ‘mire and mud,’ which is the depths of the sea, and it does not ascend to crown the head of the King.[118]

“On this day one should not openly recount his sins before another, for there are many who snatch that word and ascend, and there are witnesses to that word. Now, if it is written *From her who lies in your bosom guard the doors of your mouth* (Micah 7:5), then all the more so those who roam and scrutinize to accuse and testify against him. And all the more so, since it is impudence before all and desecration of the name of the blessed Holy One. Of this is written *Do not let your mouth incriminate your flesh* (Ecclesiastes 5:5). From here on, a secret among us.”[119]

He opened, saying, “*This month is for you head of months; it is the first for you* [*of the months of the year*] (Exodus 12:2). Now, don’t months and seasons belong to the blessed Holy One? Well, it is not written *your months*, but rather *This month is for you*—‘it is Mine, but I have given it to you; it is yours, openly revealed. However, the seventh is Mine, so it is בכסה (*ba-keseh*), *in the covering* (Psalms 81:4), not revealed. Your month follows the sequence of letters: אביב (*aviv*), ears of corn—ב י (*yod, vet*) is mystery of ג (*gimel*), so it is א ב ג (*alef, vet, gimel*), according to the sequence of letters. However, the seventh month is Mine, beginning from the end of letters. Why? You are from below to above, while I am from above to below.[120]

“‘This one is Mine. At the head of the month I am concealed; on the tenth of the month I am He, for I abide in the first five and in five others and in the third five. At the beginning of the month I am He, on account of five days; on the tenth of the month I am He, on account of five other days; on the fifteenth of the month I am He.’[121]

“Why all this? Because this whole month derives from the upper world, and the upper world abides in mystery of five at all times. Consequently this month is *ba-keseh, in the covering*, and not revealed, for the upper world is *ba-keseh, in the covering*, all its elements concealed. This month is the blessed Holy One’s alone.[122]

“Once the fifteenth day arrives, then all arrives with renewal of the moon, and the moon is completed and illumined by supernal Mother, poised to illuminate those below by the light above. Therefore it is called *first*, as is said: *You shall take for yourselves on the first day* (Leviticus 23:40). Until now all those days abide in upper mystery; from here they descend to lower mystery.[123]

“Come and see: If these first days derive from the supernal day, mystery of the upper world, then who judges the world? For Judgment appears in this world only from lower Judgment, mystery of *He is called ‘God of all the Earth’* (Isaiah 54:5). For if you say, ‘Judgment of the world is rendered above,’ then it would not be called World of Freedom, World of Radiance, World of all Joy. And if you say, ‘From the Judgment of Isaac,’ if it did arouse Judgment against this world, then the whole world could not bear it. No one can bear that fierce supernal fire except the fire below, for there is fire that endures fire. Rather, just as this world is the lowest of all worlds, so all its judgments derive from the lower world of *God is judge* (Psalms 50:6). This is called Supernal Judgment over this world, and because it is the seventh rung, it only issues a decree against a person who is twenty years or older.”[124]

The old man looked at Rabbi Shim’on and saw that his eyes were shedding tears. Rabbi Shim’on said, “If it is the seventh, then why [186b] twenty years and older?”[125]

He replied, “Happy is one who speaks to ears that listen![126]

“Come and see: A court below on earth does not decree judgment against a person until the age of thirteen. Why? Because seven years are left for the seventh—*He is called ‘God of all the Earth’* (Isaiah 54:5). No human has control over those seven, and those seven only settle upon thirteen below on earth, which are its throne. Therefore all decrees and all judgments below derive from those seven years, totaling twenty years.[127]

“Judgment of the world on Rosh Hashanah is rendered by this rung, which actually stands in judgment over its children in the world in order to be purified for the upper world, for its only assistance in ascending and being purified is from those below.[128]

“When the people of Israel abide in fifteen days, He takes His children, spreading His wings over them to rejoice with them. Of this is written *You shall take for yourselves on the first day fruit* (Leviticus 23:40)—the tree called *fruit tree* (Genesis 1:11), in which fruit appears.[129]

“*A majestic tree* (Leviticus 23:40)—as is said: הוד (*Hod*), *Splendor, and majesty before Him* (Psalms 96:6). Why is it called *majestic*, and who is *majestic*? Righteous One. Why is He called *majestic*, when it is a concealed place, which is not to be revealed and must always be covered, whereas *majestic* applies only to one who is revealed and seen? Well, although it is a concealed rung, it is the majesty of the whole body, and there is no majesty to the body except for this. Why? One who lacks this rung lacks the majesty to associate with people: he lacks a masculine voice, and the majesty of voice has been seized from him; he lacks a beard and the majesty of a beard. So although that rung is covered, all majesty of the body depends upon it; it is

covered and revealed. Thus, it is a *majestic tree*, a tree upon which all majesty of the body depends. This is *a tree yielding fruit* (Genesis 1:12).[130]

"*Fronds of palms* (Leviticus 23:40)—here, Wife is intertwined with Her Husband inseparably: כפת (*kappot*), *fronds of, palms*, as one.[131]

"*And branches of leafy trees* (ibid.)—three. And its leaves—two, one on this side and one on that side, and another ruling over them.[132]

"*And willows of the brook* (ibid.)—two, which have neither scent nor taste, like human thighs.[133]

"Thus the *lulav* conveys them all, like the spinal cord, column of the body. As for its protruding by a handbreadth, so it should be, in order to complete and generate all, performing fittingly.[134]

"Therefore with these species should a person appear before the blessed Holy One. The various leaves of these palms are all the other powers attached to the appellations by which the blessed Holy One is known. For we must appear below corresponding to the pattern above, since there is nothing in the world that lacks a paradigm above. As above, so below, and Israel must unite with mystery of faith before the blessed Holy One.[135]

"It is written: *In booths you shall dwell seven days* (Leviticus 23:42)—mystery of faith. This verse was uttered by the upper world. We have learned as follows: When the world was created, this verse was spoken.[136]

"When supernal Wisdom began to issue from a place unknown and unseen, one measure emerged and struck, and that supernal Wisdom sparkled and expanded in all directions in mystery of supernal Dwelling. That supernal Dwelling generated six aspects, and then that sparkling of the measure illumined all and said, בסכת (*Ba-sukkot*), *In booths, you shall dwell seven days*.[137]

“Who is סכת (*sukkot*), lacking ו (*vav*)? This is lower Dwelling, which is like a lantern, displaying all lights. Then It said, *In sukkot you shall dwell, O seven days*. Who are *seven days*? From the upper world to below, all of whom endure vitally to illumine this *sukkot*. And who is She? סכת (*Sukkat*), *Booth of, David; sukkat*, booth of, peace. The holy seed should sit beneath the shade of this mystery of faith, and whoever sits in this shade sits among those supernal days.[138] Therefore all of them are בסכת (*ba-sukkot*), while one is complete, demonstrating that whoever sits in this shade sits among those supernal days above, who cover and protect him whenever necessary.[139]

“Further, all of them are read as סכות (*sukkot*), complete, and when it is lacking, it is spelled סכת (*sukkat*)—lower world, who on these seven holy days [187a] feeds the various appointed princes of other nations while She is taking joy in Her Husband, so they do not contest the joy. In order for them to linger with that food, their offerings are more numerous than on other days, so that they will occupy themselves with them and not interfere afterward in Israel’s joy. What is Israel’s joy? The Day of Convocation.[140]

“Come and see: While those appointed princes are rejoicing and eating that food prepared for them by the people of Israel, they prepare a throne for the blessed Holy One from below, to elevate Her by those species, by joy, by *Hallel*, and by circling the altar. Then She ascends, receiving blessings, taking delight in Her Husband.[141]

“The other living creatures—appointed princes of other nations—devour, crush, and trample, and are nourished. She holds souls in delight above, as has been said. As She descends, grasping all blessings, holiness, and delight—and all these seven days the people of Israel have been drawing Her by those actions they perform and have been drawing close to Her—then She descends to draw near Her children and to delight them for one day. That day is eight, for all the other seven are with Her; so it is the eighth, eight days as

one. Therefore it is called עצרת (*atseret*), Convocation, ‘Gathered’—they are all gathered on this day—and it is called שמיני (*shemini*), Eighth, and eighth emerges only out of seven.[142]

“It is written: *May the name of YHVH be* מברך (*mevorakh*), *blessed* (Job 1:21). What is *mevorakh*? Everyone knows; but one of our companions in the desert knows one mystery, shown to him in a dream, and Rabbi Yitsḥak of Crete is his name. What is מברך (*mevorakh*), *blessed*? Beginning, hard; its end, soft. מ ב (*Mem, bet*) is hard, Judgment surely; afterward רך (*rakh*), soft. Similarly, the day of Rosh Hashanah is מ ב (*mem, bet*), for by *mem, bet*—by mystery of *mem bet*, forty-two, letters—the world was created, and thus created by Judgment; afterward, רך (*rakh*), soft. Concerning this we have learned: All beginnings are hard, and their endings are soft. On the day of Rosh Hashanah, hard; on the day of *Atseret*, Convocation, soft and joy.[143]

“Come and see: What is the difference between upper Judgment and this Judgment? With upper Judgment, beginning and end are hard, and no one can withstand it. The longer it proceeds, the stronger it becomes; and wherever it begins, it does not depart until consuming and destroying everything and nothing is left. But with the other Judgment below, beginning is hard, and the longer it proceeds, the weaker it becomes until the face shines—like a female whose strength weakens.[144]

“When was upper Judgment aroused to prevail over the world? On the day of the Flood. Therefore nothing remained in the world except for that ark, corresponding to the pattern above, which endured that harshness. And if the blessed Holy One had not manifested Compassion over the world, the whole world would have been destroyed, as is written: *YHVH sat enthroned at the flood* (Psalms 29:10). Therefore upper Judgment does not settle upon the world—and the world could not bear it for even one moment.”[145]

Meanwhile, Rabbi Shim’on was weeping and rejoicing. They raised their eyes and saw five of those hermits who had followed him, seeking him. They rose.[146]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “From here on, what is your name?”

He replied, “Nehorai Sava, since there is another Nehorai among us.”[147]

Rabbi Shim’on and those Companions accompanied him for three miles.[148] Rabbi Shim’on said to those others, “Why did you journey on this way?”

They replied, “To seek this old man, whose waters we imbibe in the desert.”

Rabbi Shim’on came and kissed him, and said to him, “You are Nehorai, and נהורא (*nehora*), light, dwells with you!”

Rabbi Shim’on opened, saying, “*He reveals the deep and the hidden; He knows what is in darkness, and light dwells with Him* (Daniel 2:22). *He reveals the deep and the hidden*—the blessed Holy One *reveals the deep and the hidden*, for all supernal, concealed depths are revealed by Him. Why does He reveal them? Because *He knows what is in darkness*. Were it not for darkness, light would remain unknown; but He *knows what is in darkness*. Therefore *He reveals the deep and the hidden*; for if there were no darkness, the depths and the hidden would not be revealed.

“*And light dwells with Him*. What is this light? The light [187b] that is revealed from within darkness. As for us, from within the darkness of the desert, this light has been revealed to us. May the Compassionate One let light dwell with you in this world and in the world that is coming!”[149]

Rabbi Shim’on and these Companions accompanied him for three miles. He said to him, “Why didn’t they come with you at first?”[150]

He replied, “I didn’t want to bother anyone to join me. Now that they have come, we will travel as one.”

They went on, and Rabbi Shim’on went his way. Rabbi Abba said, “Look, we know his name, whereas he doesn’t

know the name of my master!”

He replied, “From him I learned not to reveal.”[151]

פרשת כי תשא

Parashat Ki Tissa

“WHEN YOU COUNT” (EXODUS 30:11—34:35)

YHVH spoke to Moses, saying, “When you count the heads of the Israelites according to their numbers…” (Exodus 30:11–12).[1]

Come and see: They have established that no blessing from above settles upon anything that has been counted. Now, you might say, “How were the Israelites counted?” Well, a ransom was taken from them, as they have established, and there was no census until that whole ransom was collected and counted up. First, Israel was blessed, and then the ransom was counted, and then Israel was blessed again. Thus the Israelites were blessed at the beginning and at the end, and no plague arose among them.[2]

Why does a plague arise by counting? Well, because blessing does not dwell in counting; as soon as blessing departs, the Other Side settles there and can harm. Therefore a ransom and redemption are taken, to apply the counting to them, as has been established and said. [188a][3]

Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Ḥiyya were traveling on the road. As they were going along, night dusked; they sat down. While they were sitting, the day lightened. They said, “Let us rise

and go on.” They rose and went on; morning began to glow.[4]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “Look at the face of the east, how it shines! Now all those children of the East, of the mountains of light, are bowing to this light and worshiping it before the sun comes out. For once the sun comes out, how many there are who worship the sun! But these are those who worship this light, calling this light—which shines in the zone of the sun before it emerges—‘God of the shining pearl,’ and their oath is by ‘God of the shining pearl.’[5]

“Now, you might say, ‘This worship is in vain.’ But since ancient, primeval days they have thereby known wisdom. When the sun lightens, before emerging, the prince appointed over the sun emerges, with holy letters of the supernal holy Name inscribed above the head of the sun. By the power of those letters, he opens all the windows of heaven, striking them and passing. That prince enters the radiance shining around the sun, and there he remains until the sun comes forth, spreading through the world. That prince is in charge of gold and all rubies, and they worship that image there. With points and signs inherited from the ancients, from primeval days, they come to know the points of the sun, enabling them to find the location of gold and gems.”[6]

Rabbi Yose said, “How long will all these rites persist in the world! Surely falsehood has no pillars on which to stand!”[7]

The other one opened, saying, “*The lip of truth will be established forever, but the tongue of falsehood lasts only a moment* (Proverbs 12:19). Come and see: If all inhabitants of the world worshiped falsehood, it would be so. But the light and shining radiance are surely true; stars aloft in the sky are true. If out of their stupidity and deficiency, they call them ‘God,’ the blessed Holy One does not wish to destroy His own creation. Even in the time to come, the stars and

luminaries of the world will not be destroyed. But who will be destroyed? Those who worship them.[8]

"This verse means the following: *The lip of truth will be established forever*—Israel, who are *the lip of truth*: *YHVH our God, YHVH is one* (Deuteronomy 6:4). All is truth, mystery of truth, and they conclude: '*YHVH* your God is truth.' This is: *The lip of truth will be established forever*.[9]

"ועד ארגיעה (*Ve-ad argi'a*), *only a moment*. The verse should read ועד רגע (*ve-ad rega*). However, how long will they endure in the world? Until the time comes when I have rest from my harsh servitude. When *argi'a*, I can relax, *the tongue of falsehood* will be destroyed—the tongue of those who call 'God' anyone who is not God. But of Israel, who are *the lip of truth*, is written *The people whom I formed for Myself, that they may declare My praise* (Isaiah 43:21).[10]

"I remember one time when I was walking with Rabbi El'azar. He encountered a certain *hegmona*, who said to him, 'Are you familiar with the Torah of the Jews?'[11]

"He replied, 'I am.'

"He said to him, 'Don't you say that your faith is true and your Torah true, and that our faith is a lie, and our Torah a lie?' Yet it is written *The lip of truth will be established forever, but the tongue of falsehood lasts only a moment* (Proverbs 12:19). We have reigned since ancient days, and dominion has never departed from us, generation after generation—*will be established forever*, surely! As for you, for a little while you had a kingdom and right away it was removed, thereby fulfilling the verse: *but the tongue of falsehood lasts only a moment*.'[12]

"He said, 'I see that you are wise in Torah. May that man's breath expire![13] [188b] If the verse read *The lip of truth You have established forever*, it would be as you said; but it is written *will be established—The lip of truth* is destined to *be established*, which now it is not. For now the lip of falsehood stands, and *the lip of truth* lies in the dust. But in the time when truth stands erect and sprouts from

the midst of the earth, then *the lip of truth will be established forever*.'[14]

"The *hegmon* said, 'You are right! Happy are the people who possess the Torah of truth!' Some time later I heard that he converted."

They went on and reached a field and offered their prayers. Having prayed, they said, "From here on, let us join with *Shekhinah*, engaging in Torah as we go."[15]

Rabbi Yose opened, saying, "*Behold, shamed and humiliated shall be all who rage against you…* (Isaiah 41:11). One day the blessed Holy One will enact for Israel all those good things that He uttered through the true prophets. On account of these, Israel endured much evil in their exile; and were it not for all those good things that they await, which they see written in Torah, they could not stand or bear exile. But they go to houses of study, open books, and see all those good things that they await—written in Torah and promised by the blessed Holy One—and they are comforted in their exile.[16]

"Other nations revile and curse them, saying, 'Where is your God? Where are those good things that you say are destined for you? Should all nations of the world be ashamed before you?' As is written: *Hear the word of YHVH, you who tremble at His word: Your brothers who hate you*, [*who ban you because of My name, have said, 'Let YHVH be glorified, so that we may see your joy!' But they will be put to shame*] (Isaiah 66:5). Who are those *who tremble at His word*? Those who have suffered much evil, hearing many bad reports, one after another, and trembling over them, as is said: *For we have heard a cry of trembling, terror and no peace…* (Jeremiah 30:5). They tremble constantly *at His word*, when Judgment is executed.[17]

"*Your brothers who hate you… have said*—your brothers, the children of Esau.[18]

"*Who ban you*—as is said: *'Go away! Impure!' they shouted at them* (Lamentations 4:15). For no nation

despises Israel and spits in their faces like the children of Edom, who say, 'All of them are impure כנדה (*ka-niddah*), like a menstruating woman.' This is: מנדיכם (*menaddeikhem*), *who ban you*.[19]

"*For my name's sake, let YHVH be glorified* (Isaiah 66:5)—'We are children of the living God; through us His name is glorified. We rule over the world because of the one called גדול (*gadol*), "great"—*Esau*, בנו הגדול (*beno ha-gadol*), *his elder son* (Genesis 27:1). By this name the blessed Holy One is called "great"—*Gadol, Great, is YHVH and highly praised* (Psalms 145:3). We are the children of the great one, and He is great. Surely, *For my name's sake, let YHVH be glorified*.[20]

"'But you are the smallest of all—as is written: *Jacob*, בנה הקטן (*benah ha-qatan*), *her small son* (Genesis 27:15). Where is your God? Where are those good things, making all nations ashamed on account of your joy? O *that we may see your joy*, of which you speak.'[21]

"*But they will be put to shame*—the Holy Spirit said, '*But they will be put to shame*,' like shifting a curse onto another, 'for you say that *they* will then be shamed and humiliated.' Therefore the Holy Spirit uttered the words in this way.

"Thus, *They shall be shamed and humiliated—all who rage against you* (Isaiah 41:11). What is הנחרים (*ha-neḥerim*), *who rage, against you*? נחיריהון (*Neḥireihon*), their nostrils, are agitated by rage against you during this exile. At that time, *they shall be shamed and humiliated* by all the good things they see in Israel."[22]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "Certainly so! But we see, as the mighty of the world have seen, that exile persists and still the son of David has not come."[23]

Rabbi Yose said, "All this is so. But what enables Israel to endure this exile? All those promises given them by the blessed Holy One. As has been said, they enter synagogues and houses of study and see all those consolations and all that the blessed Holy One has sworn to them, and they are

comforted and rejoice in their hearts—to endure whatever comes upon them. Were it not for this, they could not endure."[24]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "Certainly so! And all depends on *teshuvah*. Yet if you say, 'We can arouse *teshuvah* now, all as one,'—they cannot. Why not? Because it is written: *It shall be, when all these things come upon you… and you return to YHVH your God and heed His voice*, then, *If your dispersed be at the ends of heaven, from there YHVH your God will gather you and from there He will take you… and you take them to heart among all the nations to which YHVH your God has driven you away* (Deuteronomy 30:1–4). Until all these words are fulfilled, they cannot [189a] be aroused to *teshuvah*."[25]

Rabbi Yose said, "How you have blocked all the ways and paths for all those in exile, leaving them with no courage to speak! If so, they will become as they were in every single generation—unable to bear exile or await the reward and abandoning the law of Torah."[26]

He opened, saying, "*Like a pregnant woman about to give birth, writhing, screaming in her pangs, so are we because of You*, [*O YHVH*] (Isaiah 26:17). Why *like a pregnant woman*? Normally, a pregnant woman undergoes nine full months, yet there are many in the world who undergo only one or two days of the ninth. All pangs and pains of pregnancy occur in the ninth; and although they undergo only one day, it is considered as if they underwent the entire ninth.[27]

"Similarly with Israel: Once they have experienced the actual taste of exile, if they engage in *teshuvah*, it is considered as if they underwent all those things written in Torah—especially given that so much has befallen them since the day that exile began.[28]

"But what is written? *When you are in distress and all these things find you at the end of days* (Deuteronomy 4:30). Come and see how much love is expressed by the

blessed Holy One to Israel in this word! This may be compared to a king who had an only son whom he loved with his whole soul. In his love he gave him to his mother, the *matronita*, to raise him and teach him proper ways. One time he sinned against his father. His father came and punished him with lashes, and afterward forgave his sin. He relapsed and sinned against his father, and his father expelled him from the palace in anger. The son departed.[29]

"But instead of following the path of truth and being virtuous, fittingly, so that his father, the king, would hear and long for him, what did he do? He said to himself, 'Since I have left my father's palace, from now on I will do whatever I want!' What did he do? He went and associated with whores, besmirching himself filthily with them, and he was always to be found in their company. His mother, the *matronita*, inquired after her son every day, and she knew that he was associating with whores and only with them. She started to cry and grieve for her son.[30]

"One day the king entered her chamber and saw her crying. He asked her why. She replied, 'Shouldn't I cry? Our son is outside the royal palace, and not only does he no longer live in the palace, he is with whores! What will everyone in the world say? "The king's son is living in a brothel!"' She started to cry and plead to the king.

"The king said, 'For your sake I will bring him back—and you will be responsible for him.'

"She replied, 'I surely will!'

"The king said, 'Since it is so, he must not be returned in the daytime, openly, for it would be embarrassing for us to go find him in a brothel. Had it not been like this—that he soiled himself so and defiled my honor—I and all my soldiers would have gone for him with great glory, with many spiral trumpets[31] before him, with many weapons on his right and on his left, until all inhabitants of the world would tremble and all would know that he is the king's son. Now, since he

soiled himself and defiled my honor, he must return secretly, so that he will not be recognized.'

"He returned to the king, and he gave him over to his mother. After some time, he sinned as before. What did the king do? He expelled him along with his mother from the palace, saying, 'Both of you, go! And both of you, suffer blows there! Since both of you will suffer together, I know that my son will repent properly.'

"Similarly, the people of Israel are sons of the Holy King, and He brought them out of Egypt. Now, you might say, 'At that time they had not sinned.' However, the decree enacted by the blessed Holy One between the halves had to be fulfilled. And the blessed Holy One considered two things. One, because of what Abraham said: *How shall I know that I will inherit it?* (Genesis 15:8)—this is [189b] the reason and cause. However, until they went out of Egypt they were not a nation and did not seem worthy."[32]

He opened, saying, "*Like a rose among thorns, so is my beloved among the maidens* (Song of Songs 2:2). The blessed Holy One wished to fashion Israel according to the supernal pattern, to be one rose on earth corresponding to what is above. A rose emitting fragrance, choicest of all roses in the world, is solely one rising *among thorns*—this one wafts fittingly. Therefore He sowed seventy couples, who were seventy souls, and inserted them *among thorns*. As soon as those couples were there, the thorns sprouted branches and leaves, ruling over the world; and then the rose bloomed among them.[33]

"Once the blessed Holy One sought to pluck the rose, picking it from among them, the thorns withered and were thrown away, destroyed, and considered worthless. When He went to pick this rose, to bring out His firstborn son, the King proceeded—among many hosts, princes, and chieftains with banners flying. He delivered His firstborn son with many mighty deeds, and brought him to His palace, where he dwelled for long.[34]

“When he sinned, as before, and rebelled against his Father, He expelled him from His house. What did Israel do? Seeing that they had been scattered to Babylon, they mingled among the nations, married foreign women, and engendered children with them. Even so, Holy Mother was their guardian.[35]

“Because they had acted so, the blessed Holy One said, ‘Since it is a disgrace, let My son come by himself; because he has defiled My honor, it is unseemly for Me to go there and bring him out, performing miracles and mighty deeds as before.’ So they returned without the assistance befitting them, without wonders and miracles; rather, all dispersed, all weary in poverty, returning to the King’s palace in shame, with Holy Mother responsible for them.[36]

“They sinned as before. What did the blessed Holy One do? He expelled this son from His palace and his Mother with him, saying, ‘From here on, Mother and son, you will suffer much evil together’—as is written: *For your crimes, your mother was sent away* (Isaiah 50:1). Of this is written *When you are in distress and all these things find you* הימים באחרית (*be-aḥarit ha-yamim*), *with the end of days* (Deuteronomy 4:30). What is *with the end of days*? Well, this is Holy Mother, who is *the end of days*, and with Her they suffered all that they suffered in exile.[37]

“And if they engage in *teshuvah*, even one evil or one affliction will be considered equivalent to their having suffered everything, and as if the evil extremity had been terminated with all its generations—as the Holy Lamp said, for it is written: *irreversibly to its buyer throughout his generations* (Leviticus 25:30). All this depends on *teshuvah*.”[38]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “Certainly so! And therefore exile persists.[39] But whatever the blessed Holy One has foreseen for Israel, He will enact for them through this *end of days*—miracles and vengeance, as is written: *In the end of days, the Mount of YHVH’s House will be established at the head of*

the mountains (Isaiah 2:2). Who is *the head of the mountains*? Abraham the Elder, high priest, head of all. Since He is head, the Cup of Blessing *will be established at the head of the mountains*—Abraham the Elder, preceding the other mountains. The Cup of Blessing must be set on the right.[40]

"*And elevated above the hills* (Isaiah 2:2)—it must be raised by the measure called a 'span,' raised from the table to bless the blessed Holy One. This is *and elevated*. What is *above the hills*? Well, between Her and *virgins behind her, her companions* (Psalms 45:15) is the measure of a span. The Cup of Blessing is surely *elevated above the hills*. Therefore the good that will befall this firstborn son is *by the end of days*."[41]

He said to him, "You have explained this verse well! For surely this is the Right, Abraham the Elder, who is indeed *the head of the mountains. And elevated above the hills*—by the measure of *the hills*, namely *her companions*. Well spoken! But what is *And all the nations will stream to it* (Isaiah 2:2)?"[42]

He replied, "Even women and children; for the waiter serving at the table—although he has not eaten, he must listen and respond, 'Amen.' For a person should not say, 'I haven't eaten; and since [190a] I'm not included in the invitation to say Grace, I won't listen or respond, "Amen."' Everyone is obligated.[43]

"Alternatively, *And all the nations will stream to it*—although women and children are exempt from the commandments, everyone is obligated to the cup of blessing, as long as they know whom they bless. This is *And all the nations will stream to it*."[44]

Rabbi Yose came and kissed him. He said, "How beautiful is this word, how sweet to the palate!

"Now we should examine precisely: If this is really *the end of days*, what is *the Mount of YHVH's House* (Isaiah 2:2)? It should have been written as follows: *The end of days will*

be established at the head of the mountains. Why *In the end of days, the Mount of YHVH's House*?"[45]

He replied, "*The end of days* is the entire tree from top to end, which is the Tree of Good and Evil. The verse comes to refine *the end of days* and extracts *the Mount of YHVH's House*—good without evil. *The Mount of YHVH's House*, surely—with no portion there for the Other Side, since *the Mount of YHVH's House* has been selected from the Tree, *the end of the days*. This is the Cup of Blessing, which is *established at the head of the mountains*."[46]

Rabbi Yose, "Happy is this way, that I was privileged to hear this!"

He asked him, "From whom did you hear it?"[47]

He replied, "One day I was traveling on the road and I saw Rav Hamnuna Sava, who was expounding this verse for Rabbi Aḥa. As soon as I heard, I rejoiced over it, and I kept it bound in the fold of my garment so that it would never leave me."[48]

He said, "Surely, this holy word shone from the radiance of the Holy Lamp. Happy is the generation inhabited by pillars and pedestals of the world! If you bound this word with one knot so that it would not leave you, I will bind it with thirty or forty knots in my pouch so that it never leaves me!"[49]

"… concerning the matter that the blessed Holy One indicated to Moses; for even though the people of Israel sin before Him in every single generation, He does not want anyone to defame them. How do we know? From Hosea, as is written: *When YHVH first spoke through Hosea* (Hosea 1:2)—they have established the matter. Consequently, *The number of the Children of Israel will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or counted* (ibid. 2:1). Thus he blessed them with many blessings to bring them back in *teshuvah*, to restore them to their Father in heaven; and he

did not depart from there until the blessed Holy One forgave all their sins and they were purified before Him.[50]

"Of Elijah, what is written? *He came and sat under* רתם (*rotem*), *a broom bush*… (1 Kings 19:4). He said, 'Master of the Universe! You sent a woman to Israel whose name was Deborah, as is written: *She used to sit under* תמר (*tomer*), *the Palm of* [*Deborah*] (Judges 4:5)—this is רתם (*rotem*), *a broom bush*—and she restored them to the good path, as is written: *until you arose, O Deborah* (ibid. 5:7). Yet I have come among them and proclaimed before them with no success.'[51]

"While he was sitting, the blessed Holy One revealed Himself to him and said, '*What are you doing here, Elijah?* (1 Kings 19:9). At first, you were accusing zealously on behalf of the covenant, and when I saw that you were zealous for Me regarding that covenant, I took it with the consent of Moses and gave it to you, so Moses said, *I hereby grant him My covenant of peace* (Numbers 25:12). Now that it is yours, it is not proper for you to accuse on its behalf. You should leave your zeal to Me—as before, when it was Mine, I left it in another's hand and did not accuse on its behalf. Now, *what you are doing* פה (*poh*), *here*?' What is *poh*? The enduring covenant is פה (*peh*), the mouth of, *YHVH*. 'Since you did not want to leave your mouth to Me, let it be reborn in the place of that mouth.'[52]

"We have learned: At that moment the present given to him by Moses was taken from him. For we have learned: Why is it written *With the strength from that eating he walked as far as the mountain of God at Horeb* (1 Kings 19:8)? To seek it from there. Now, did he really seek it from there? Rather, to seek it as before from the one who had inherited this covenant on *the mountain of God*. Phinehas is Elijah, surely on a single rung.[53]

"Moses said to him, 'You cannot receive it from me. Rather, go to the babies of Israel, and from them you will attain it; they will give it you.' And so he did.[54] "How much

goodness the blessed Holy One has bestowed upon Israel in every single generation! Come and see what is written: *I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam* (Micah 6:4). Now, there were so many prophets after Moses! [190b] [The verse should read] *I sent before you Moses, Aaron, Eleazar, and Phinehas; Joshua, Elijah, and Elisha*—and many other righteous and pious ones. Why these three? Well, the blessed Holy One said, 'My people, My children! Why do you not remember all the goodness that I bestowed upon you in sending you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam? A king of flesh and blood who has a province and sends to it august governors to lead the people, oversee them, and inspect their laws—who is obligated to provide their food and necessities? Do not the people of the province, even against their will, have to look after them and honor them?

"I sent Moses, and he brought you manna to eat and he led you, your children, and your animals, and exerted himself in administering your laws and in everything you needed. I sent Aaron, and he brought palaces to shelter you: clouds of glory to cover you like kings, washing you in glorious dew so that your clothes and shoes did not decay, but were renewed daily. I sent Miriam, and she brought a well to provide you with water, and you and your animals drank. They gave to you, and of their own you ate and drank, sitting under their canopy of glory; but of your own, you gave them nothing. Moreover, they exerted themselves for you and took your burdens on their necks, yet you reviled and cursed them.'"[55]

Rabbi Yose said, "There has never been a father as compassionate to His children as the blessed Holy One. This is indicated by a verse: *Not a single word has failed of all His good words…* (1 Kings 8:56). Come and see His compassion! If it said *Not a single word has failed of all His words*, and nothing more, it would be better for the world to have never been created. But since it says *of all His good words*, it leaves the bad behind, for He does not want to

enact a bad word. And even though He threatens and raises the lash, Mother comes and grasps His right arm, so the lash remains suspended, does not descend, and is not implemented, because both of them share one plan: He by threatening, and She by holding back His right arm.[56]

"Now, you might ask, 'How do we know this?' From a word that is revealed, as is written: *Go, get down! For your people has acted corruptly* (Exodus 32:7)—He began to raise the lash, and Moses, not knowing the way of the Mother, was silent. As soon as the blessed Holy One saw this, He prodded him and struck him by saying, *Now, leave Me be!* (ibid., 10). Immediately, Moses perceived and he seized His arm, as is written: *Remember Abraham* (ibid., 13)—His right arm. Therefore the lash did not descend.[57]

"Now, you might ask, 'Where was Mother, who usually holds back the lash of the King? Why did She leave the matter to Moses?' I ask this myself, for we will not know the clarity of the matter until we are in the presence of the Holy Lamp."[58]

When they came before Rabbi Shim'on, he saw a sign in their faces. He said, "Enter, holy children! Enter, beloved of the King! Enter, my beloved ones! Enter, beloved of one another!"[59]—

For Rabbi Abba has said, "All those Companions who do not love one another depart from the world before their time. All the Companions in the days of Rabbi Shim'on loved one another in soul and spirit. Therefore the generation of Rabbi Shim'on was unconcealed."[60]

For Rabbi Shim'on used to say, "All Companions who do not love one another divert themselves from the straight path. Moreover, they produce a defect in her! For Torah entails love, brotherhood, and truth: Abraham loves Isaac; Isaac, Abraham; they embrace one another. Both are linked with Jacob in love and brotherhood, offering him their

spirit, each of them. Companions must follow that paradigm and not produce a defect!”[61]—

Once he saw a sign in their faces and said that, they said to him, “Surely a spirit of prophecy settles upon the Holy Lamp, and so we must know!”[62]

Rabbi Shim’on wept, and said one of those words whispered to him from the head of the Academy of the Garden of Eden, not spoken openly. “This is a secret; yet I will tell you, my beloved children, my children, beloved of my soul. What shall I do? They told me in a whisper, but I will tell it openly. And when the time comes that we see face-to-face, [191a] all faces will consent with one another.[63]

“My children, the sin committed by the outsiders, in which the Holy People participated, was a sin against Mother, as is written: *Rise up, make us Elohim!* (Exodus 32:1)—*Elohim*, precisely, the Glory of Israel, the one who hovers over them like a mother over her children. This is the mystery of what is written: *They exchanged their glory* (Psalms 106:20)—the Glory of Israel, their Mother. This is what is written: *Glory is exiled* (1 Samuel 4:22), for they caused *Shekhinah* to be exiled along with them. Thus, *They exchanged their glory*. For what? *For the image of a bull* (Psalms, ibid.).[64]

“Here is mystery of the matter. Come and see: Below, within the dregs of wine, evil dregs, emerges one agitator, the Accuser, Primordial Demon. He is in mystery of the image of *Adam* when he approaches holiness. As soon as he is removed from there and seeks to descend, he must clothe himself in a garment to damage the world; then he descends with his chariots. And the first garment that he seizes is תבנית שור (*tavnit shor*), *the image of a bull*, the form of a bull. The first of those four damagers is *shor*, an ox, and those four are the primary ones to damage the world. All three primary causes of damage aside from *shor* belong to it,

and therefore it is written: *They exchanged their glory for the image of* *shor*, *a bull*.[65]

"What is *eating grass* (Psalms 106:20)? We have already interpreted it, but the essence of the matter is that it has no share in the residue of bread or of the seven species of grain.[66]

"Therefore Mother was not there, and it would not have been fitting for Her to be there. But since Father knew the compassion of Mother and Her ways, He said to Moses—

O my beloved children, the plan of them both is always for this! This is what they whispered to me secretly, for it is improper to reveal, so that the son will not know—but will imagine that the lash is readied and be always afraid. But both of them share this plan, one plan.[67]

"Come and see! It is written: *The people saw that Moses* בשש (*voshesh*), *lagged* (Exodus 32:1). Who are *the people*? The mixed multitude. Who are the mixed multitude? Were they Lydians, Ethiopians, Cretans, and Togarmans, that they are called 'mixed multitude'? Were they not Egyptians, journeying from Egypt? If they were a mixture of many nations, it should have been written *A mixed multitude* עלו (*alu*), *went up, with them*, corresponding to their mixture. Rather, *A mixed multitude* עלה (*alah*), *went up, with them* (Exodus 12:38)—they were one nation, with one language, but consisting of all the sorcerers of Egypt and all its soothsayers, of whom is written *and they too, the soothsayers of Egypt, did* [*thus with their spells*] (Exodus 7:11), wanting to confront the wonders of the blessed Holy One. Once they saw the miracles and wonders that Moses performed in Egypt, they returned to Moses. The blessed Holy One said to Moses, 'Do not accept them!'

"Moses said, 'Master of the Universe! Now that they have seen Your power, they want to convert. Let them see Your power every day and they will know that there is no God but You.' And Moses accepted them.[68]

“Why were they called ערב רב (*erev rav*), *mixed multitude*? Well, they consisted of all the sorcerers of Egypt, headed by Yannes and Yambres, and they always performed their sorcery during the daytime. All these eminent sorcerers would gaze from when the sun inclined, from the beginning of the seventh hour to the beginning of the ninth, namely ערב רברבא (*erev ravreva*), great evening. All those minor sorcerers, from the beginning of the ninth until midnight.[69]

“The eminent among them would gaze from when the sun inclined, for then 995 rungs begin to roam over the mountains of darkness, and their spirit would sweep over those sorcerers during their sorcery, and they could do whatever they wished, so that all the Egyptians placed their trust in them and called them *erev rav*. For there is ערב זעירא (*erev ze’eira*), small evening, from nine-and-a-half hours [191b] and onward—this is *erev ze’eira*. There are two *arvei*, evenings, and thus *erev rav went up with them* (Exodus 12:38).[70]

“Their wisdom was great, and they observed the hour and examined the rungs of Moses and saw that in all aspects בְּשֵׁשׁ משה (*be-shesh Moshe*), Moses was in six: in the first six hours of the day, over which they had no power; in six supernal rungs, linked with him. In all aspects he was in six, and in the crowns of these six he was destined to descend from the mountain, as is written: *that Moses* בששׁ (*voshesh*), *lagged—was be-shesh, in six—in coming down from the mountain* (Exodus 32:1).[71]

“Immediately, *The people assembled against Aaron* (ibid.). We have learned as follows: When Moses descended, having received the Torah, he alone was the totality of Israel, and he received the Torah in the world and even the scroll of Esther, as is written: וקבל היהודים (*Ve-qibbel ha-yehudim*), *The Jews received* (Esther 9:23). The verse should read וקבלו היהודים (*ve-qibbelu ha-yehudim*), *The Jews received*; why *ve-qibbel*? Well, this is Moses, who is *the Jews*, totality of the Jews.[72]

"*The people assembled against Aaron*. Why *against Aaron*? In order to be included in the right side; for they sought the left from him, and in order for it to be included in the right, they gathered against him.

"*They said, 'Rise up, make us Elohim'* (Exodus 32:1)—*Elohim*, precisely; they sought the left side.[73]

"*That* יֵלְכוּ (*yelekhu*), *will go, before us* (ibid.). The verse should read *that* יֵלֵךְ (*yelekh*), *will go*; why *that yelekhu*? Well, *Elohim* consists of six rungs—all those on the left of *Elohim* number six. And if you say that there are seven—that supernal *Elohim* is not included in the total.[74]

"Come and see: The entire time that Moses was in Egypt, he never mentioned the name *Elohim*, making it difficult for Pharaoh; and from there on, the name *YHVH*—so that the Other Side would have no potency or be empowered in the world. Now they sought that element, and thus: *Rise up, make us Elohim*—*us*, precisely, 'for we need this element in order to strengthen our side, which has been thrust away until now.'[75]

"*That will go before us*. What were they saying? Well, they were saying as follows: 'We see that you, Israel, have all the goodness and all the glory of the world, while we are thrust outside. For you, *YHVH was going before them by day* (Exodus 13:21); so too, *that will go before us*, just as *YHVH* goes before you. For our side has the power to walk similarly before us, if we prepare an action for him.'[76]

"Come and see: All the clouds of glory moving through the wilderness covered only the Children of Israel, and that cloud of glory—of which is written *YHVH was going before them by day*—went before them. But this *mixed multitude* and all those cattle, sheep, and oxen walked outside the camp, behind. And come and see: All those forty years that Israel journeyed in the wilderness, no stain or filth appeared within the area of the clouds. Therefore the sheep and oxen, eating grass, were outside along with all those who tended them."[77]

Rabbi El'azar said, "Father, if so, that mixed multitude did not eat the manna!"[78]

He replied, "Certainly so! Only what Israel gave them, like giving to a slave. And what did they eat? The residue, what was left behind the millstones, the refuse. Scripture proclaims: *The Children of Israel ate the manna forty years* (Exodus 16:35)—*the Children of Israel* and no one else. *The Children of Israel saw, and they said to each other*, 'מן הוא (*Man hu*), *What is it?*' (ibid., 15)—and not the mixed multitude or the sheep and oxen among them.[79]

"That mixed multitude was not subdued, and now they rose and sought an action to empower the Other Side. They said, 'Either we all become one people so that we are included with you, or let us have someone to go before us, as your God goes before you.'

"Aaron said, 'Heaven forbid that these should cause the Holy People to stumble, by all becoming one whole! The Holy People must not mingle with this people as one totality. Rather, it is better to separate them from the Holy People until Moses comes.'

"Aaron's intention was good; but there were many from Israel who in their hearts participated with them. Therefore when Moses came, he had to purify and cleanse the Holy People from that sin, and he made them drink a potion until they were all purified [192a] and no refuse remained in them at all.[80]

"Aaron said, '*Tear off the golden rings*' (Exodus 32:2). Now, didn't they have any other gold? However, Aaron thought, 'While they are quarreling with their children and their wives, they will be delayed. And in the meantime, Moses will arrive.'[81]

"Come and see! We have learned: 'Converts are as hard for Israel as a scab on raw flesh'—especially these who were not proper converts. What did they do? It is written: *All the people tore off the golden rings that were on their*

ears (Exodus 32:3). How many thousands and myriads of their earrings were there![82]

"What is written? *He took from their hand and he fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf* (Exodus 32:4). Aaron did not protect himself from those two wise men who were at the head of that mixed multitude, one of them in front of him and the other performing his sorcery. Once the two of them plotted as one, they grabbed that gold—one, two, in the hand of one, and a third in the hand of the other; for so it must be in that type of sorcery."[83]

Rabbi Shim'on wept, and said, "O pious, holy one! Aaron, anointed of the great God! Through your piety, so many of the Holy People fell—and you did not know![84]

"What did they do? When six hours arrived and the day was in balance, they took that gold which they had torn off their ears. Why? Because one who has to perform sorcery must not spare money. They said, 'The hour is auspicious for us if we do not delay. This is no time to care about money!' Immediately, *All the people tore off* (Exodus 32:3). What is ויתפרקו (*va-yitparequ*), *tore off*? As is said: מפרק (*mephareq*), *tearing out, mountains and smashing rocks* (1 Kings 19:11) —they tore their ears."[85]

He wept as before, "O Holy People! O Holy People of the blessed Holy One!"

Rabbi Shim'on started weeping, and said, *"His master shall make him approach the gods and make him approach the door or the doorpost, and* [*his master*] *shall pierce* [*his ear with an awl, and he shall serve him perpetually*] (Exodus 21:6). The Companions have established this: 'One whose ear heard on Sinai, *For Mine are the Children of Israel as servants; they are My servants* (Leviticus 25:55), and yet broke off the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven and sold himself to another, shall be uprooted.' These sinners and wicked evildoers, in craving to revert to their repulsiveness, did not ask their wives and children but

injured [themselves], and they were ripped from the yoke of Heaven that Moses had enjoined upon them, and they tore their ears, for they had no share in the great people.[86]

"What did they do? The two of them divided that gold: one took two and the other took one-third. They rose facing the sun at the sixth hour; they performed their sorcery and cast their spells with verbal magic. As the beginning of the seventh arrived, they both raised their hands to the hands of Aaron. How do we know that he took it from the hands of the two of them and not from more? As is written: *He took from their hand* (Exodus 32:4)—the two of them and no more. As soon as he received *from their hand*—two, and not *their hands*—a voice issued, saying, '*Hand to hand, the evil one will not go unpunished*' (Proverbs 11:21), as is written: *that it is bent on evil* (Exodus 32:22); they brought evil into the world.[87]

"Mystery of the matter: Those evil, wicked ones, sorcerers—sons of Balaam the wicked, grandsons of Laban the wicked—saw that the Cup of Blessing is on the right, and from the right is always strengthened. They said, 'If that head of the right will be on this side, then our power will be fine.'[88]

"As soon as the seventh hour of the day arrived, they immediately gave it to Aaron. If he had said to them, 'First put it on the ground and I will take it,' they would not have accomplished anything with their sorcery. But he took from their hand, and Scripture complains, saying: *He took from their hand* (Exodus 32:4). See what Aaron did—prophetic man, wise man, who did not know to protect himself! If he had taken it from the ground, all the sorcerers of the world could not have succeeded. But how did they succeed in this act? Because *he took from their hand*, and not from the ground.[89]

"ויצר אותו בחרט (*Va-yatsar oto ba-ḥeret*), *He fashioned it with a ḥeret* (Exodus 32:4). Not as people think, that he made figures with a chisel or something else; rather, Scripture

comes to demonstrate that Aaron did not know to protect himself. If, when he had taken it from their hands, he had thrown it to the ground—even if he had picked it up afterward—this evil act would not have [192b] succeeded. But throughout there was evil assistance, for he took the gold and concealed it from the eye—evil upon evil! What is *Va-yatsar oto ba-ḥeret*? That he placed all the gold in a bag, where it was kept. Then everything was actualized.[90]

"In the Book of Enoch I have found that he said as follows: 'An only son was born to that White Head. And when those of donkeys' flesh come, they will deceive him by the one who carries pearls with bells of gold—without his knowledge, and he will fashion an image בחרט אנוש (*be-ḥeret enosh*), with the stylus of a human—the reed of the wicked Enosh, who led humans astray.'

"Surely, this is clarity of the word! For when Enosh led the world astray, with that reed he designed all images of alien worship—with that reed he designed, and so it is בחרט (*ba-ḥeret*), *with the stylus*, the one known to do so. This is clarity of the word![91]

"It was all! For surely he threw the gold in a bag, hiding it from view, as those sorcerers say. So it must be with these types of sorcery, and this is the practice of these sorcerers: Whatever must be eventually revealed requires hiding and concealment first, so that it be hidden from view, and afterward the craftsman generates his artistry. And whatever must eventually be concealed must first be revealed.[92]

"Now, my beloved children, beloved of my soul! What shall I do? Surely I must reveal. Listen and conceal my words![93]

"On the side of Holiness, that *Elohim* of truth, King over the world, is empowered by three elements: by בריאה (*beri'ah*), Creation; by יצירה (*yetsirah*), Formation; and by עשיה (*asiyyah*), Actualization. The mystery of each and every one is mentioned here. Corresponding to Creation: *He took from*

their hand (Exodus 32:4)—something that until now contained nothing at all. Corresponding to *yetsirah*, Formation: ויצר (*va-yatsar*), *and he fashioned, it* (ibid.). Corresponding to *asiyyah*, Actualization, ויעשהו (*va-ya'asehu*), *and made it, into a molten calf* (ibid.). Who has ever seen such sorcerers in the whole world![94]

"Now it should be said: 'Is it not written *I threw it into the fire*—and nothing more—and then *out came this calf* (Exodus 32:24)? Yet now you say *he made it into a molten calf* (ibid., 4)!' However, Heaven forbid that Aaron made it! And Scripture proves this, as is written: *He took the calf that they had made* (ibid., 20). But based on what is written: *He took from their hand… and he wrapped it* (ibid., 4)—by the power of these two, all was made. As if it were possible, he made it; because were it not for these two, it would never have been made nor have emerged in artistry. But what caused it to be made? These two. As if it were possible, *he made it*—he surely made it! While he was taking it *from their hand*, they were performing their sorcery, mouthing their incantations, and gradually drawing down a spirit from the Other Side.[95]

"They drew two spirits as one, one from the male and one from the female. The male was clothed in the image of an ox, the female in the image of a donkey, both combined as one. Why these two? Well, as for the ox, this has already been discussed. Why a donkey? Because of these Egyptian sorcerers is written *whose flesh is the flesh of donkeys* (Ezekiel 23:20).[96]

"Thus, all those of Israel who died had joined with them in their hearts. And because there were two images, it is written: *These are your gods, O Israel* (Exodus 32:4)—it is not written *this*, but rather *these*, two who were as one. *Who* העלוך (*he'elukha*), *brought you up, from the land of Egypt* (ibid.)—and not העלך (*he'elekha*).[97]

"It is written: *He made it into a molten calf. And they said*, [*'These are your gods…'*] (Exodus 32:4). It is not

written *And he said*, but rather *And they said*, for Aaron said nothing.

"We have learned: There were 120 hundredweights in it. How, then, can it be written *He took from their hand* (Exodus 32:4)? Were all these hundredweights *in their hand*? Rather, from the total of those hundredweights they each took a handful, and that small amount was esteemed as all, as if it all were in their hands.[98]

"Come and see what is written: *Aaron saw, and he built an altar before it* (Exodus 32:5). O pious, holy one! How good was your intention, yet you did not know how to protect yourself! As soon as he cast it into the fire, the power of the Other Side was strengthened there in the fire, and the image of an ox emerged, [193a] as has been said, with two drawn from the Other Side. Immediately, *Aaron saw*. What did he see? He saw that the Other Side was empowered; and if he had not hastened and built this altar, the world would have reverted to desolation.[99]

"This may be compared to a robber who would go out to rob and kill people. The king's legionnaire saw that this robber was setting out forcefully, brazenly. He persuaded the king to go out on the road, and the legionnaire conducted him onto that particular road. While the robber was traveling on that road, he saw the image of the king standing before him. As soon as he saw the king before him on the road, he recoiled and retreated.

"Similarly, *Aaron saw* that the Other Side was empowered. He seized a remedy and grasped the Holy Side and placed it in front of it. As soon as the Evil Side saw the image of the King standing before it, it retreated, and its strength and power, which had increased, weakened. Immediately, *he built an altar before it*—this altar was empowered, and the Other Side weakened.[100]

"Come and see what is written: *Aaron called out and said, 'A festival to YHVH tomorrow!'* (Exodus 32:5)—*a festival to YHVH*, and not *to the calf*. For the side of Holiness he made

it, and for the side of Holiness he called out. This remedy he hastened to apply, because were it not for this, the world would not have maintained its existence.[101]

"Despite all this, His wrath against Aaron did not subside, even though he had intended no evil. The blessed Holy One said to Aaron, 'These two sorcerers drew you to what they desired. By your life, your two sons will fall, and for this sin they will be seized!' As is written: *With Aaron, YHVH was greatly enough incensed to destroy him* (Deuteronomy 9:20). What does this mean: *to destroy him*? This refers to his sons, as is said: *I will destroy his fruit* (Amos 2:9)—a person's *fruit* is his children.

"Come and see: Aaron placed that *altar before it*, and the calf retreated. Aaron's sons placed the Other Side before Him, as is written: *They offered* [*alien fire*] *before YHVH* (Leviticus 10:1)—placing it *before YHVH*. They were seized for this sin.[102]

"Aaron thought that in the meantime Moses would come, so Moses did not destroy that altar. For if it were as people think, the first thing that Moses should have done would be to smash that altar, as Iddo prophesied regarding the altar of Bethel, and his prophecy was against that altar. But here it was a different matter, as has been said. And it is written: *He took the calf that they had made…* (Exodus 32:20)—and it is not written *and he smashed the altar*.[103]

"Come and see: *Aaron called out* (Exodus 32:5)—he proclaimed. Here is written *He called out and said*, and of Jonah is written *He called out and said*, ["*Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown*!"] (Jonah 3:4). Just as there, he proclaims Judgment, so here he proclaims Judgment.[104]

"*A festival to YHVH tomorrow!* (Exodus 32:5). He prophesied by that spirit of the altar that Judgment was destined to befall them. *A festival to YHVH*—to execute Judgment upon you.[105]

“There were three judgments. One, *YHVH plagued the people* (Exodus 32:35); one, by the sons of Levi; and one, that he made the Israelites drink. Thus, *A festival*, of the sons of Levi; *to YHVH*, of *YHVH plagued*; *tomorrow*, that Moses made them drink. They slept that night, and *tomorrow* they were found bloated and dead; that water churned in their intestines all night, and in the morning they were found dead. Thus, *A festival to YHVH tomorrow!* And the entire remedy that Aaron applied was by means of what is written: *He built an altar before it* (Exodus 32:5).[106]

“Come and see regarding that altar, for it is written: *He saw the calf and the dancing* (Exodus 32:19), whereas the altar is not mentioned. For Aaron knew well what is written: *Whoever sacrifices to gods shall be utterly destroyed—only to YHVH alone* (ibid. 22:19). Surely Aaron was saved by the good advice that he offered himself, and all was by perfectly good intention, for he had no evil aim.”[107]

Rabbi El’azar said, “Father, certainly so! And they were not Israelites. But as for Jeroboam, who made calves—they were Israelites and they made a calf!”[108]

He replied, “Certainly, and they have established it. But Jeroboam sinned and caused others to sin—and not as they have said, for surely he committed a grave sin, sinning against the Kingdom.[109]

“Jeroboam said, ‘I surely know that the side of Holiness dwells only in the heart of the whole world, namely Jerusalem. I cannot draw that side here; what shall I do?’ Immediately, *The king took counsel, and he made* [*two golden calves*] (1 Kings 12:28)—he took evil counsel. He said, [193b] ‘The Other Side is immediately drawn to any place, especially to this land, where it craves to dwell. But it can clothe itself only in the image of a bull.’[110]

“Why two calves? Well, Jeroboam said, ‘In Egypt there were those sorcerers, of whom is written *whose flesh is the flesh of donkeys* (Ezekiel 23:20). Here, not so; those two evil spirits should be clothed fittingly: they are male and

female.’ The female was in Dan, and since it is written *The lips of an alien woman drip honey* (Proverbs 5:3), the Israelites were drawn to her intensely, as is written: *The people went as far as Dan to worship before the one there* (1 Kings 12:30). Therefore there were two calves, drawn by Jeroboam into the Holy Land; the sin was upon him and upon Israel, and he deprived the world of blessings. Of him is written *He who robs his father and mother* [*and says, ‘It is no crime,’ is partner to a destroyer*] (Proverbs 28:24).[111]

“Therefore they were calves, for the first garment donned by the Other Side is a bull, as has been said. Now, you might say, ‘Why not a bull? For it is a calf!’ Well, surely this is fitting, and so in all aspects: the beginning of the garment is small, as we have established.[112]

“So, my beloved children, since they desired *Elohim* and the work was constructed with an aspect of *Elohim*, therefore Holy *Elohim*—Mother, who always grasps the arm of King, so the lash is suspended—was not there, and Moses had to take Her place. As soon as the blessed Holy One prodded him, he perceived.[113]

“Three times He prodded him! O Moses, Faithful Shepherd, how mighty is your strength, how great is your power! Three times He prodded him, as is written: *Now, leave Me be*—one. *That My wrath may blaze against them and I may consume them*—two. *And I will make you a great nation* (Exodus 32:10)—three. The wisdom of Moses was in these three points. He grasped His right arm, corresponding to *Leave Me be*. He grasped the left arm, corresponding to *that My wrath may blaze against them and I may consume them*. He embraced the body of the King, corresponding to *and I will make you a great nation*. Once he had embraced the body—both arms, from this side and from that—He could not move in any direction at all. This was the wisdom of Moses: by the pointed words of the King, he knew, in each one of them, where to hold firm. He acted in wisdom!”[114]

Rabbi El’azar and the Companions came and kissed his hands. Rabbi Abba was there, and he said, “If we have come into the world just to hear this, it is enough for us!”[115]

He wept, and said, “Woe, Rabbi, when you depart from the world! Who will illumine and reveal lights of Torah? This word was hidden in darkness until now when it emerged from there—and, look, it shines to the loft of the sky and is engraved upon the Throne of the King. The blessed Holy One rejoices now in this word. How much joy upon joy is added in the presence of the Holy King! Who will arouse words of wisdom in the world as you do?”[116]

Come and see: Until Adam sinned, he ascended and abode in supernal, radiant wisdom, never parting from the Tree of Life. Once he indulged in desire to descend and know below, he was drawn after them until he parted from the Tree of Life, knowing evil, abandoning good. Therefore it is written: *You are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil cannot abide with You* (Psalms 5:5). Whoever is drawn toward evil cannot abide with the Tree of Life. Until they sinned, they used to hear a voice from above, perceive supernal wisdom fearlessly. Once they sinned, even a voice from below they could not endure.[117]

Similarly, when Israel stood at Mount Sinai, before sinning, the slime of this serpent was eliminated from them, for the evil impulse was repulsed by them, universally abolished. Then they were grafted to the Tree of Life, ascending, not descending; knowing, seeing supernal specula; eyes glistening, delighting in discovery, in listening. Then the blessed Holy One girded them with belts of letters of the Holy Name, so the serpent could not dominate or defile them as before. Once they sinned with the calf, all those supernal rungs and lights were removed from them, along with the belts bristling with crowns of His supreme name. Attracting the evil serpent as before, they inflicted death upon the whole world.[118]

What is written next? *The Children of Israel saw the face of Moses, and behold*, [194a] *the skin of his face glowed, and they were afraid to come near him* (Exodus 34:30). Come and see what is written previously: *Israel saw the great hand* (ibid. 14:31). All of them were seeing supernal radiancies, being illumined by the resplendent speculum, as is written: *All the people were seeing the voices* (ibid. 20:15). By the sea they were gazing fearlessly, as is written: *This is my God and I will glorify Him* (ibid. 15:2). After they sinned, what is written? *They were afraid to come near him*.[119]

Come and see what is written of them: *The Children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments from Mount Horeb on* (Exodus 33:6), for they were divested of those weapons girded on them at Mount Sinai, preventing the evil serpent from dominating them. Once they were deprived of these, what is written? *Moses took the Tent and pitched it for himself outside the camp, far from the camp* (ibid. 33:7).[120]

Rabbi El'azar said, "What is this verse doing next to that? Well, since Moses knew that those supernal weapons had been removed, he thought, 'Surely from here on, the evil serpent will come dwell among them. If the sanctuary remains standing here among them, it will be defiled.' Immediately, *Moses took the Tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp*, for he saw that, unlike before, the evil serpent would prevail."[121]

He called it Tent of מועד (*Mo'ed*), *Meeting* (Exodus 33:7). Was it not so previously? Well, at first it was simply *Tent*; now *Tent of Mo'ed*. What is *Mo'ed*? Rabbi El'azar explained it positively; Rabbi Abba, negatively.[122]

Rabbi El'azar explained positively, "Just as מועד (*mo'ed*), festival, is a day of joy for the moon, when Her holiness waxes and She is free of defect, so now he called Her by this name, showing that She had been removed far from

them and not been tainted. Therefore it is written: *He called it Tent of Mo'ed, Festival*."[123]

Rabbi Abba explained negatively, "At first, it was simply *Tent*, as is said: *a tent not to be packed up, whose pegs will never be pulled out* (Isaiah 33:20). Now, *Tent of Mo'ed, Slated Time*. At first, extending long life eternally, so that death would not prevail. From here on, *Tent of Mo'ed*, as is said: *the house mo'ed, slated, for all living* (Job 30:23). Now time is allotted, life rationed to the world. At first, untainted; now tainted. At first, joining and coupling of the moon with the sun unceasingly. Now, *Tent of Mo'ed, Slated Time*, their coupling from time to time. So *He called it Tent of Mo'ed*, unlike before."[124]

One night Rabbi Shim'on was sitting, engaged in Torah. Sitting in front of him were Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Yitsḥak, and Rabbi Yose.

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Look at what is written: *The Children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments from Mount Horeb on* (Exodus 33:6)! We have said that from that moment on they inflicted death upon themselves, and the evil serpent they had just removed now dominated them. This may be true of the Israelites, but what of Joshua, who did not sin? Was he, too, divested of that supernal weapon he received with them at Mount Sinai or not? If you say not, then why did he die like all other human beings? And if you say he was, why, seeing that he had not sinned, for he was with Moses when Israel was sinning? And if you say he did not receive the same crown received by Israel at Mount Sinai, why not?"[125]

He opened, saying, "*For YHVH is righteous, loving righteousness; the upright shall behold His face* (Psalms 11:7). Concerning this verse, the Companions have said what they have said; but: *For YHVH is righteous*—He is righteous and His name is Righteous, so: *loving righteousness. Upright*—He is *upright*, as is said: *Righteous*

and upright is He (Deuteronomy 32:4). So all inhabitants of the world *shall behold His face*, mending their ways to follow the straight path fittingly.[126]

"Come and see: When the blessed Holy One judges the world, He does so according to the majority of human beings.[127]

"Come and see: When Adam sinned by eating from the tree, he turned that tree into a dwelling of death for the whole world; he caused a defect, separating the Woman from Her Husband. The fault of this defect stood out in the moon, until Israel stood at Mount Sinai, when [194b] that defect of the moon disappeared, enabling Her to shine constantly. Once Israel sinned with the calf, She relapsed into defectiveness; the evil serpent prevailed and seized Her, dragging Her to him. When Moses discovered that Israel had sinned and been divested of their sacred weapons, he knew for sure that the serpent had seized the moon to drag Her to him, that She had been tainted. So he brought Her outside. Although Joshua maintained his armored crown, She was susceptible to defect—and defect abode in Her and She slipped back into the defectiveness caused by Adam's sin. Consequently, no human being can endure except for Moses, who controlled Her and whose death ensued from another aspect. So She was not empowered to sustain Joshua forever, nor anyone else. Therefore he called it *Tent of* מועד (*Mo'ed*), *Slated Time* (Exodus 33:7), a tent holding allotted time for the entire world.[128]

"So mystery of the word: There is right above, and there is right below. There is left above, and there is left below. Right above in supernal holiness; right below on the Other Side. Left above in supernal holiness, arousing love, linking the moon with a sacred site to shine. Left below, separating love above, preventing Her from reflecting the sun and drawing near. This is the side of the evil serpent; for when this lower left arouses, it attracts the moon,

separating Her from above—so Her light darkens and She cleaves to the serpent. Then She draws death below for all, distancing Herself from the Tree of Life, inflicting death upon the whole world. Consequently the sanctuary is defiled for a fixed time till the moon is restored and resumes shining; thus, *Tent of* מועד (*Mo'ed*), *Slated Time*.[129]

"Therefore Joshua died only through the incitement of the serpent, who approached and tainted the Dwelling as at first. This is the mystery written: *Joshua son of Nun, a youth* —although he was *a youth* below, absorbing light, *he would not depart from within the Tent* (Exodus 33:11): as one was impaired, so was the other. Even though he possessed the sacred weapon, since he was tainted he was surely not singularly spared from that very aspect, as has been said.[130]

"Happy are the righteous, who know mysteries of Torah and cleave to Torah, fulfilling the verse *You shall meditate on it day and night* (Joshua 1:8). For her sake they will attain life of the world that is coming, as is written: *for she is your life and the length of your days*... (Deuteronomy 30:20)."[131]

פרשת ויקהל

Parashat Va-Yaqhel

“HE ASSEMBLED” (EXODUS 35:1—38:20)

Moses assembled the whole community of the Children of Israel and said to them… (Exodus 35:1).[1]

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, *“Saul said to the Kenites, ‘Go, turn away, come down from amidst the Amalekites, lest I sweep you away together with them, for you did kindness to all the Children of Israel when they came up from Egypt’* (1 Samuel 15:6). Come and see what is written of Amalek: *I have made reckoning of what Amalek did to Israel, that he set against him on the way* (ibid., 2). Now, the blessed Holy One was present in all the battles waged by other nations against Israel. Why were those not as troubling to Him as this battle waged by Amalek? Well, surely the battle of Amalek was on all fronts: above and below; for at that time the evil serpent was empowered above and empowered below.[2]

“Just as a serpent lurks on the crossroads, so here too Amalek was an evil serpent for Israel, lurking for them [195a] on the crossroads, as is written: *that he set against him on the way when he was coming up from Egypt* (1 Samuel 15:2). He was lurking above to defile the Sanctuary, and lurking below to defile Israel. How do we know? As is written: *how he encountered you on the way* (Deuteronomy 25:18). Here is written *how* קרך (*qarekha*), *he encountered*

you, and there is written *who becomes impure through a nocturnal* מקרה (*miqreh*), *mishap* (ibid. 23:11).[3]

"Therefore, of Balaam is written ויקר אלהים (*Va-yiqqar Elohim*), *God encountered, Balaam* (Numbers 23:4). *Va-yiqqar, He encountered*—Scripture employs a term of defilement. Now, you might say, 'Look, it is written *Elohim*!' Well, the blessed Holy One arranged for him that place of defilement, in which to be defiled by the rung to which he clung. What did Balaam do? He planned, by those sacrifices, to ascend. Immediately the blessed Holy One arranged that place for him, saying to him: 'Here is defilement for you, as befits you.' Thus, *Va-yiqqar Elohim, God encountered, Balaam*.[4]

"Similarly, *how* קרך (*qarekha*), *he encountered you, on the way*—he summoned against you that evil serpent above to defile on all sides. If Moses had not attacked above, and Joshua below, Israel would not have prevailed against him. Therefore the blessed Holy One retained that enmity for generations. Why? Because he intended to uproot the sign of Covenant from its place. Consequently, *I have made reckoning* (1 Samuel 15:2)—by 'reckoning,' because mystery of the sign of holy Covenant is implied there.[5]

"Come and see what is written: *Saul said to the Kenite* (1 Samuel 15:6). Who is *the Kenite*? Jethro. Now, who placed the children of Jethro here, to have their abode among Amalek? Look, they dwelled in Jericho! However, it is written: *The children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, journeyed from the City of Palms into the desert of Judah…* (Judges 1:16), and from there they dwelled in the territory of Amalek until the time when King Saul came, as is written: *And the Kenite turned away from the midst of Amalek* (1 Samuel, ibid.). For when the wicked are present, those virtuous ones found among them will be seized for their sins, as has been established.[6]

"Similarly, if not for that mixed multitude who joined Israel, Israel would not have been punished for the incident of the Golden Calf. Come and see what is written at first:

From every man whose heart impels him, [*you shall take My offering*] (Exodus 25:2)—including all, for the blessed Holy One wished to construct the Dwelling from all sides: kernel and shell. Since that mixed multitude was in their midst, it was said *from every man whose heart impels him*, to include them among Israel, who are the kernel. So all of them were commanded.

"Afterward, kind turned to its kind: that mixed multitude came and built the calf, and those who were to die strayed after them, inflicting upon Israel death and slaughter. Then the blessed Holy One said, 'From here on, the Dwelling will be constructed from the side of Israel alone.' Immediately, *Moses assembled the whole community of the Children of Israel and said to them… 'Take from yourselves an offering'* (Exodus 35:1, 5)—surely, not as before: *from every man whose heart impels him*.[7]

"*Moses assembled the whole community*. From where did he gather them? Well, because that mixed multitude was among them, Moses had to gather them and isolate them."

Moses assembled. Rabbi Abba opened, "*Assemble the people, the men and the women…* (Deuteronomy 31:12). Just as there the totality of Israel, so here the totality of Israel. And who are they? Six hundred thousand."[8]

Rabbi El'azar explained the verse as referring to Israel when Moses descended from the mountain, as is written: *Joshua heard the sound of the people as it shouted, and he said to Moses, "A sound of war in the camp!"* (Exodus 32:17). "*Joshua heard*—now, did Joshua hear and Moses not hear? Rather, until now Joshua did not know, whereas Moses did. If so, what is ברעה (*be-re'oh*), *as it shouted*? Well, it is spelled ברעה (*be-re'oh*), with a ה (*he*), for that sound was on the Other Side. And Joshua, who was the face of the moon, perceived that the sound was on the side of רעה (*ra'ah*), evil;

immediately, *he said to Moses, ‘A sound of war in the camp!’*[9]

“At that moment, the two tablets of stone that existed originally broke. As we have established, they became too heavy for his hands [195b] and fell.[10]

“Come and see: In the four directions of the worlds, at the turn of the four seasons, a voice arises, and by that voice is aroused an arousal of the Other Side. That arousal of the Other Side interposes between one voice and another, and light of the voice below darkens, because light of the voice above does not reach the voice below. Then that arousal interposing between one and the other is called Serpent who seduces the woman, and it seizes the light. And that voice is *a sound of war*, קול רעה (*qol ra’ah*), an evil sound, and this is ברעה (*be-re’oh*).[11]

“Therefore Joshua heard, and not Moses, because that evil had seized the light of the moon, to which Joshua was linked; whereas Moses, who was linked to the sun, did not hear. The light of all Israel darkened because of that evil clinging to them.[12]

“As soon as the blessed Holy One forgave their sin, *Moses assembled the whole community of the Children of Israel and said to them* (Exodus 35:1)—for that mixed multitude had been removed from them.”[13]

Rabbi El’azar and Rabbi Yose were sitting one night, engaged in Torah. They awoke before the night split. Meanwhile, the rooster crowed, and they recited a blessing.

Rabbi El’azar said, “Now is the time when the blessed Holy One enters the Garden of Eden to delight with the righteous.”[14]

Rabbi Yose asked him, “Why does the blessed Holy One delight?”

Rabbi El’azar wept, and said, “Come and see: Until now the blessed Holy One has shaken 390 firmaments and kicked them, and wept over the destruction of the Temple,

and shed two tears into the Great Sea, and remembered His children through weeping.[15]

"For night is divided into three aspects, through its twelve recorded hours; and if hours are added to the night, those additional hours are from the day, since only twelve hours of the night are considered hers. Those twelve are divided into three aspects, among which are distributed three camps of holy angels.[16]

"The first camp is appointed for the first four hours in the beginning of night to praise their Lord. What do they say? *The earth and her fullness are YHVH's, the world and those who dwell in her. For upon seas He founded her, and upon rivers set her firm. Who shall ascend the mount of YHVH, and who shall rise in His holy place? The clean of hands* [*and the pure of heart*]… (Psalms 24:1–4). Why this? Because when night spreads its wings over the world, all its inhabitants experience a taste of death and their souls depart to ascend, and these angels stand and say '*Who shall ascend the mount of YHVH?*' *The mount of YHVH*—the Temple mount. *His holy place*—the court of Israel. As above, so below.[17]

"For in every single firmament numerous princes and officers are stationed. When souls depart they seek to ascend, and if they are unworthy, these thrust them aside and they go wandering through the world; and many ravaging bands of dazzling demons grab them and convey to them false information—and sometimes true information about what is soon to come, as they have established.[18]

"Those souls of the righteous go roaming above, and doors are opened for them and they are raised into the place called *the mount of YHVH*, corresponding to the mystery of the Temple mount below. From there they enter the place called *His holy place*, where all souls appear before their Lord, corresponding to the place where Israel appeared before the blessed Holy One, the place called 'the court of Israel.' When souls are standing there, their Lord

rejoices in arraying with them the place called Holy of Holies, where their deeds and merits are inscribed.[19]

"The second camp is appointed for the following four hours, and they chant song only for two hours, until the night is split and the blessed Holy One enters the Garden of Eden. These are the mourners of Zion, those who weep over the destruction of the Temple. At the beginning of the middle four hours they open, saying, *By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and we also wept*, [*when we remembered Zion*] (Psalms 137:1)—those who wept *by the rivers of Babylon* along with Israel, [196a] as implied by what is written: *we also wept*. How do we know that they cried there? As is written: *Behold, the Erelim cried outside* (Isaiah 33:7). What does *outside* mean? Babylon, for they all accompanied them to Babylon, and there they wept with them. So they open with this, and conclude: *Remember, O YHVH, the Edomites, on the day of Jerusalem*, [*saying: 'Raze it, raze it to its foundation!'*] (Psalms 137:7).[20]

"Then the blessed Holy One is aroused with His rungs, and kicks the firmaments, and twelve thousand worlds tremble, and He roars and weeps, as is written: *He roars from on high*… (Jeremiah 25:30). He remembers Israel and sheds two tears into the Great Sea. Then a flame is aroused on the north side, and a wind of the north side strikes that flame, which sweeps through the world. At that moment, the night is split, and the flame strikes the wings of the rooster, and it crows.[21]

"The blessed Holy One finds no comfort until He enters the Garden of Eden to delight with the souls of the righteous. Your mnemonic is: *'For we have been sold, I and my people….' And the king said, 'Who is this…?' The king rose in his fury and went into the palace garden*… (Esther 7:4–7). When the blessed Holy One enters the Garden of Eden, all those trees of the garden and all those souls of the righteous open, saying, *Lift up your heads, O gates!… Who is the King of glory?*… (Psalms 24:7–8).[22]

“When the souls of the righteous on earth return to their bodies, all those angels hold them and say, *Here, bless YHVH, all you servants of YHVH*, [*who stand in the house of YHVH by night!*] (Psalms 134:1). And we have learned that the third camp chants this during the last four hours until the morning light rises, and then all those stars and planets and all those supernal angels who rule by day praise their Lord. They all praise their Lord and utter song, as is written: *When the morning stars sang together*, [*and all the sons of God shouted for joy*] (Job 38:7).

“When the sun emerges, Israel takes up song below, as does the sun above. As the sun moves in its sphere, a sweet voice begins, uttering song. What song does it sing? *Give thanks to YHVH, call upon His name… Sing to Him…* (Psalms 105:1–2). And Israel praises the blessed Holy One by day along with the sun, as is said: *May they revere You with the sun* (ibid. 72:5)—even though we have already established this verse.”[23]

Rabbi El’azar said, “If the inhabitants of the world were not so closed-minded and blind, they could not bear the sweet sound of the sphere of the sun as it moves, praising the blessed Holy One.”[24]

While they were engaged in Torah, the day shone. They rose and came before Rabbi Shim’on. As soon as he saw them, Rabbi Shim’on said, “El’azar, you and the Companions hide yourselves for these three days! Do not go outside, for the Angel of Death is present in town and has permission to harm, since once he is authorized he can harm. Furthermore, if a person appears before him, he ascends and accuses him, recounts his sins, and demands justice before the blessed Holy One; he does not withdraw from there until that person is sentenced and handed over to him, and he kills him.”[25]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “By *Elohim*! Most of the world do not die before their time, except those who do not know how to protect themselves. For from the moment that the deceased

is taken from his house to the cemetery, the Angel of Death appears among the women. Why among the women? Because that has been his way since the day he seduced Eve, on account of whom he inflicted death upon the whole world. So, when he kills a person, and men are present with the dead one, he enters among the women on the way, from the time when the deceased is taken from his house to the cemetery until they return to their homes. On account of them, he brings death upon many men in the world before their time. Of this is written *Some are swept away without justice* (Proverbs 13:23)—for he ascends and accuses and recounts a person's sins before the blessed Holy One, and that person is judged for those sins and passes away before his time.

"What is his remedy? When the deceased is carried to the cemetery, a man should turn [196b] his face and leave the women behind his shoulders. And if they precede him, he should walk behind, so as not to see them face-to-face. Afterward, as they return from the cemetery, he should not return on the same way where the women are standing, nor should he look at them at all, but rather turn a different way. Because people do not know or consider this, most of the world are arraigned in judgment and pass away before their time."[26]

Rabbi El'azar said, "If so, it is better for a person not to escort the dead."

He replied, "No. For when a person protects himself in this manner, he is worthy of long life, and all the more so of the world that is coming.

"Come and see: Not for nothing did the ancient ones ordain the blowing of a shofar to conduct the deceased from his house to the cemetery. Now, if you say that this is for the deceased—no, rather to protect the living, so that the Angel of Death will not overpower them, accusing above, and they will be on guard against him."[27]

He opened, saying, "*When you enter into battle in your land*… (Numbers 10:9), and we have noted precisely: *against the foe* (ibid.)—the Angel of Death. *Who assails you* (ibid.)—*who assails you* constantly and kills people, the righteous and pious, assailing the living for their deaths and seeking to kill others. What is the remedy against him? *You shall sound a blast* (ibid.). On Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Judgment above, this angel descends to examine human beings and ascends to indict them. The people of Israel, who know that the Angel of Death descends to be their accuser, hasten with the shofar—blasting him so he will not prevail against them, protecting themselves. All the more so, when he executes judgment and kills a person, appearing below! All the more so, when people go to the cemetery and return from there! For when women lift their feet to escort the deceased, he descends and appears before them, as is written: *Her feet descend to death* (Proverbs 5:5)—*Her feet descend* to whom? To the one called *death*. Thus, Eve brought death upon the whole world. May the Compassionate One save us![28]

"Come and see what is written: *Such is the way of an adulteress*… (Proverbs 30:20), and we have established this. But, *Such is the way of an adulteress*—the Angel of Death, and so he is called. *She eats and wipes her mouth* (ibid.)—she scorches the world with her flames and kills people before their time. *And says*, '*I have done no wrong*' (ibid.)—'for I demanded justice against them and they were found guilty and died justly.'[29]

"When Israel made the calf and all those multitudes died, the Angel of Death appeared among the women within the camp of Israel. As soon as Moses saw the Angel of Death among the women, amid the camp of Israel, he immediately gathered all the men separately, as is written: *Moses assembled the whole community of the sons of Israel* (Exodus 35:1)—the men, whom he gathered and isolated.[30]

“The Angel of Death did not withdraw from the women until the Dwelling was erected, as is written: *Moses erected the Dwelling* (Exodus 40:18). Even when the women were bringing freewill offerings to the Dwelling, he did not depart from them, until Moses saw, and advised the men not to come in one company with them—so as not to see each other face-to-face—but rather behind their shoulders, as is written: *The men came, besides the women* (Exodus 35:22). It is not written *The men brought*, but rather *came* —not entering among them on the way, but rather behind their shoulders; for the Angel of Death did not separate from them until the Dwelling was erected.[31]

“Come and see: He is not found among women numbering less than seven or less than ten. On the way, openly, he is found among seven and demands justice. Among ten, he accuses in order to kill. Because he was among them on the way, openly, it is written *The men came, besides the women*.”[32]

That whole day, all those Companions were on guard and contemplated Torah.

Rabbi Shim’on opened, saying, “*YHVH said to Noah, ‘Come into the ark, you and all your household’* (Genesis 7:1). We have established this verse, but come and see! Could not the blessed Holy One have protected Noah in one place in the world, so that [197a] the flood would inundate the whole world except for that place—as is written of Gideon: *Only the fleece was dry*, [*while there was dew all over the ground*] (Judges 6:40)? Or could He not have kept him in the land of Israel, as is written: *not rained upon on the day of wrath* (Ezekiel 22:24), for the waters of the Flood did not fall upon it?[33]

“However, once the Destroyer descends to the world, whoever does not shut himself in, but appears before him openly, forfeits his life and thus kills himself. How do we know? From Lot, as is written: *Flee for your life! Don’t look behind you…* (Genesis 19:17). Why *don’t look behind you*?

Because the Destroyer was walking behind his shoulders, and if he had turned his head and looked at him face-to-face, he could have harmed him. Therefore of Noah is written *YHVH shut him in* (ibid. 7:16), so that the Angel of Death would not prevail against him."[34]

While they were hidden, thirteen men in town died. Rabbi Shim'on said, "Blessed be the Compassionate One, that the Angel of Death did not perceive your images!"[35]

Moses assembled (Exodus 35:1). He repeated for them, as before, the construction of the Dwelling.[36]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "All as has been said, and the Dwelling was constructed by Israel alone, and not by that mixed multitude. For the mixed multitude drew down the Angel of Death into the world. As soon as Moses saw him, he expelled that mixed multitude and gathered Israel separately, as is written: *Moses assembled*."[37]

Moses assembled. Rabbi Shim'on opened, "*Who has gone up to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in the hollow of his hands? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if you know?* (Proverbs 30:4). We have established this verse, which contains many symbols, and it all refers to the blessed Holy One, who is all! Now, if you say, '*What is his name, and what is his son's name?*'—this is the blessed Holy One. *What is his name? YHVH* is His name. *What is his son's name?* Israel, as is written: *My son, My firstborn, is Israel* (Exodus 4:22), as we have established.[38]

"*Who has gone up to heaven?* They have established: this is Moses, as is written: *To Moses He said*, '*Go up to YHVH*' (Exodus 24:1). However, *Who has gone up to heaven?* Elijah, of whom is written *Elijah ascended in a whirlwind to heaven* (2 Kings 2:11). Now, how could Elijah ascend to heaven, when all the heavens cannot bear even as much as a mustard seed of a body of this world? Yet you say, *Elijah*

ascended in a whirlwind to heaven! However, like this: *YHVH came down upon Mount Sinai* (Exodus 19:20), and it is written *Moses entered within the cloud and went up the mountain* (ibid. 24:18). Now, the blessed Holy One was on Mount Sinai, and it is written *The sight of YHVH's glory was like consuming fire at the mountaintop* (ibid., 17); so how could Moses ascend to Him? Well, of Moses is written *Moses entered within the cloud*—entering the cloud as one dons a garment; thus he donned the cloud, entering it. In the cloud he approached the fire and was able to draw near. Similarly, of Elijah is written *Elijah ascended in a whirlwind*—entering that whirlwind and donning it and thereby ascending.[39]

"I found a secret in the Book of Adam describing the generations of the world: 'There will be a spirit that will descend to the world, on earth, and will don a body, and Elijah is his name. In that body he will ascend, and his body will persevere and remain in the whirlwind, and another body—of light—will be prepared for him to be among the angels. When he descends, he will don that body remaining in the whirlwind, and in that body he will manifest below, while in the other body he will manifest above.' This is the mystery of *has gone up to heaven and come down* (Proverbs 30:4). There has never been a human whose spirit has gone up to heaven and afterward come down except Elijah, for this is the one who ascended and descended.[40]

"Alternatively, *Who has gone up to heaven?* Elijah. *And come down*—Jonah, who descended to the abyss, to the depths of the sea. Jonah derived from the power of Elijah. Elijah ascended, Jonah descended. One prayed that he might die, and the other prayed that he might die. Thus he is called *son of* אמתי (*Amittai*) (Jonah 1:1), and it is written *The word of YHVH in your mouth is* אמת (*emet*), *truth* (1 Kings 17:24).[41]

"*Who has bound the waters?* (Proverbs 30:4). Elijah, who bound a bundle of waters, and no dew or rain from

heaven came down. *In a garment* (ibid.)—Elijah, who brought [197b] his mantle to perform miracles.[42]

"*Who has gathered* רוח (*ruaḥ*), *the wind, in the hollow of his hands?* (ibid.). Elijah, who restored רוחא (*ruḥa*), the breath, of a human within him. אסף (*Asaf*), *has gathered*—as is said: ואסף (*ve-asaf*), *and heal, the leprosy* (2 Kings 5:11).[43]

"*Who has established all the ends of earth?* (Proverbs 30:4). Elijah, who, after binding the waters and adjuring the heavens, turned back in prayer and established the whole world: rain came down and food was provided for all.[44]

"*What is his name?* (Proverbs 30:4). Elijah. *What is his son's name?* (ibid.). Elijah. *What is his name* when he ascended? Elijah. *What is his son's name* when he descends and becomes a messenger to perform miracles? Elijah is his name.[45]

"Alternatively, *Who has gone up to heaven?* The blessed Holy One, as we have established. Mystery of the matter is מי (*Mi*), *Who*, as we have established. Here is mystery of the supernal Chariot in four directions, which are the primordial elements of all, all dependent on that supernal place called *Mi, Who*, as has been said.[46]

"Come and see: When a time of favor arises before the blessed Holy One to unify the supernal Chariot, so that all may be one, a voice issues from that supernal holy place called *heaven* and gathers all these holy ones below and all those holy princes and supernal camps, so that they all be ready together, as is written: *Moses assembled* (Exodus 35:1)—mystery of *heaven*. *The whole community of the Children of Israel* (ibid.)—those twelve supernal holy camps. *And said to them* (ibid.)—what did he say? *This is the thing* [*that YHVH has commanded, saying,*] '*Take from yourselves an offering* [*for YHVH*]' (ibid., 4–5)—prepare yourselves to lift and carry the glory of the holy Throne, raising it above. Distinguish those venerated ones, those supernal princes, to raise that *offering*, mystery of the holy Throne, to be

united with the Patriarchs; for *Matronita* can approach Her Husband fittingly only with Her virgin maidens escorting Her, conducting Her to Her Husband, as is said: *virgins behind her, her companions*… (Psalms 45:15). Why all this? *To YHVH* (Exodus 35:5)—to come join Her Husband.[47]

"כל נדיב לבו (*Kol nediv libbo*), *Everyone whose heart impels him* (Exodus 35:5)—those four supernal camps, comprising in their totality all the other camps, and these issue from the supernal Patriarchs, called נדיבים (*nedivim*), nobles, as we have established, for it is written: *delved by* נדיבי (*nedivei*), *nobles of, the people* (Numbers 21:18)—the Patriarchs.[48]

"יביאה (*Yevi'eha*), *shall bring it* (Exodus 35:5)—it is not written יביאוה (*yevi'uha*), *they shall bring it*, but rather *yevi'eha, he shall bring it*—unifying them all as one. Similarly, it is not written יביא (*yavi*), *he shall bring*, but rather *yevi'eha, he shall bring her*—raising Her to Her Husband, as it should be.[49]

"את תרומת (*Et terumat*), *An offering for, YHVH* (Exodus 35:5)—*et*, amplifying the meaning to include all those other supernal camps, uniting all as one. They are twelve, in one totality: *Gold, silver, and bronze; violet, purple, and crimson, linen and goat hair; reddened ram skins, tanned-leather skins, and acacia wood; oil for lighting, spices for the anointing oil and for the aromatic incense* (ibid., 5–8). These are twelve supernal camps, all comprised in totality of four, called holy living creatures, as has been said. All these raise the holy Throne, conveying Her above to unite with Her Husband, to be present with Her in supernal glory. Then the supernal King sits upon the holy Throne, and Wife is united with Her Husband, so that all becomes one; then, joy of all.[50]

"Come and see: Here, Scripture begins by enumerating *gold* first and then *silver*, since this is reckoning from below. But when it comes to enumerate the elements of the supernal Chariot, it begins from the right, and then from the left. How do we know? As is written: *Mine is the silver and Mine is the gold* (Haggai 2:8)—*silver* first, and then

gold. Whereas with the lower Chariot, it begins from the left, and then from the right: *gold, silver, and bronze* (Exodus 35:5)—*gold* first, and then *silver*.[51]

"All those chariots are called *whose heart impels him* (Exodus 35:5). *Everyone* (ibid.)—including all the other chariots.[52]

"*Heart*. What is *heart*? Corresponding to the mystery that is written: *A good-hearted person has a continuous feast* (Proverbs 15:15). This is heart of all; this is the holy Throne. So they are called [198a] *heart*. *Everyone whose heart impels him*—as we have established, for these four camps, totality of them all, are called in one mystery *whose heart impels him*.[53]

"*An offering for* YHVH (Exodus 35:5)—holy Throne; since they raise Her and elevate Her, She is called תרומת (*terumat*), *a raised offering for,* YHVH. Consequently, when Ezekiel saw the mystery of the living creatures rising, he did not see what they were raising, since She was rising toward the supernal King in hidden concealment, in supernal glory.[54]

"*Every wise-hearted one among you* (Exodus 35:10)—those sixty springs watering the world, from whom it is watered.[55]

"*Shall come* (ibid.). Why *shall come*? Well, to come gather from the treasury of life. *Shall come*—and afterward *do* what the blessed Holy One commanded them to shepherd the world."[56]

Take from yourselves an offering… (Exodus 35:5).

Rabbi Yehudah opened, "*Is it not to share your bread with the hungry?* (Isaiah 58:7). Come and see: Happy is one's portion when he encounters a poor person! For a poor person is a gift that the blessed Holy One has sent to him. Happy is the share of one who receives that gift cheerfully![57]

“Come and see: Whoever feels compassion for the poor and restores his soul is considered by the blessed Holy One as if he created his soul. Thus Abraham, who took compassion upon all inhabitants of the world, the blessed Holy One considered him to have created them, as is written: *and the souls they had made in Haran* (Genesis 12:5), although we have already established this.[58]

“*Is it not to share your bread with the hungry?* What is פרוס (*paros*), *to share*? למפרס (*Le-miphras*), to spread, a tablecloth with bread and food to eat. Alternatively, *Is it not paros, to share?*—as is said: פריס פריסת (*Pereis perisat*), *Pereis—has been divided* (Daniel 5:28), for one should למפרס פריסן (*le-miphras perisan*), break pieces, of bread before him so that he will not feel ashamed, and one should break it before him generously.[59]

“*Your bread* (Isaiah 58:7). It is not written *bread*, but rather *your bread*—what is yours, from your own money, not acquired by robbery, extortion, or theft. For if so, it has no merit; rather, woe to him, since it recalls his sins! Similarly, *Take from yourselves an offering—from yourselves*, from what is yours, not by extortion, robbery, or theft, as we have established.”[60]

Rabbi Ḥiyya, Rabbi Yitsḥak, and Rabbi Yose were traveling on the road. As they were going, Rabbi Abba met them. Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “Surely, *Shekhinah* is with us!”[61]

When he reached them, Rabbi Abba said, “It is written: *Ever since I brought My people, the Children of Israel, out of Egypt, I did not choose a city among all the tribes of Israel; but I chose David* (1 Kings 8:16). The end of this verse does not match its beginning, nor the beginning its end! It is written: *I did not choose a city, but I chose David*. What does one have to do with the other? It should read *but I chose Jerusalem*.[62]

“However, when the blessed Holy One wishes to build a city, He first contemplates the leader of the people of the

city, and then builds the city and brings the people there; as is written: *I did not choose a city*—until I contemplated David, to be a shepherd over Israel. For a city and all its inhabitants depend upon the shepherd who leads the people. If the shepherd is good, it is well for him, well for the city, and well for the people; if the shepherd is bad, woe to him, woe to the city, and woe to the people![63]

"Now the blessed Holy One gazed upon the world, and it arose in His will to build it, and He established at the head of the generation Rabbi Shim'on and the Companions to stand before Him.[64]

"I have heard a new word!" He opened, saying, "*Happy is he whose help is the God of Jacob*… (Psalms 146:5). Now, is He *the God of Jacob*, and not the God of Abraham, and not the God of Isaac? However, *the God of Jacob*, for Jacob did not place his trust in his father or in his mother—he fled from his brother and went without money, traveling alone, as is said: *for with my staff I crossed this Jordan* (Genesis 32:11); and he trusted in the blessed Holy One, as is written: *If God will be with me* (ibid. 28:20). Everything he asked from the blessed Holy One, and He gave it to him.[65]

"שברו (*Sivro*), *whose hope, is for YHVH his God* (Psalms 146:5). *Sivro*—Scripture does not say תקותו (*tiqvato*), *his hope*, or בטחונו (*biṭḥono*), *his trust*. However, do not read שִׂברו (*sivro*), *his hope*, but rather שִׁברו (*shivro*), *his breaking*; for the righteous one is content to break himself, to be broken again and again, and all *for YHVH his God*, as is said: *For Your sake we are killed all* [198b] *day long* (Psalms 44:23); *For Your sake we have endured scorn* (ibid. 69:8).[66]

"Similarly with Jacob, as is written: *Jacob saw that there was* שבר (*shever*), *breaking, in Egypt* (Genesis 42:1)—for he saw the calamity of exile awaiting him in Egypt, yet he placed his strength in the blessed Holy One. And Jacob's children suffered the calamity of exile, yet they did not deviate from the mystery of faith of their fathers, and the name of the blessed Holy One was frequently on their lips.

Therefore it is written: *and they say to me, 'What is His name?'* (Exodus 3:13)—because they knew and never forgot it, and they endured the calamity of exile for the sake of the blessed Holy One. Consequently, they merited redemption and miracles.[67]

"As for you, holy ones of the Highest, who endure breaking of the body from place to place for the sake of the blessed Holy One, how much more are you worthy of miracles and redemption and attaining life of the world that is coming!"[68]

They all went on as one. He opened, saying, "*Take from yourselves an offering for YHVH*. [*Everyone whose heart impels him shall bring it*]... (Exodus 35:5). Come and see: When a person directs his will toward serving his Lord, that desire arises first in the heart, which is the foundation and vitality of the whole body. Then that fine desire reaches all members of the body. For all members of the body and the desire of the heart join as one, drawing upon themselves the radiance of *Shekhinah* to dwell with them, and that person becomes a portion of the blessed Holy One, as is written: *Take from yourselves an offering for YHVH*—the flow is *from yourselves*, receiving that *offering* to become a portion *for YHVH*.[69]

"Now, if you say that this is beyond one's power, look at what is written: *Everyone whose heart impels him shall bring her, an offering for YHVH* (Exodus 35:5)—*everyone whose heart impels him*, surely! Anyone whose heart desires can draw *Shekhinah* to himself, as is written: *shall bring her*—even though She is elevated on high, *he shall bring her* from a supernal place to dwell with him. And when She comes to settle with him, how many blessings, how many riches does She bring with Her, as is written: *gold, silver, and bronze* (ibid.)! No riches of the world will he lack. This is for other inhabitants of the world; but as for you, holy ones of the Highest, *take from yourselves an offering for YHVH*."[70]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, “He who has begun to raise an offering, let him raise!”[71]

He opened, saying, “*YHVH spoke to the fish*, [*and it vomited Jonah onto dry land*] (Jonah 2:11). Where did He speak to it? Well, when the blessed Holy One created the world in the beginning, on the fifth day He created the fish of the sea. Then He commanded and said that one fish was destined to swallow Jonah and keep him in its belly three days and three nights and then cast him out.[72]

“Not this alone, but with everything that the blessed Holy One fashioned in the act of Creation, He made stipulations. On the first day He created the heavens and stipulated that Elijah would ascend to them in a whirlwind, as is written: *Elijah ascended in a whirlwind to heaven* (2 Kings 2:11). On that day He stipulated with them that they would darken the sun in Egypt three days, as is written: *and there was pitch dark in all the land of Egypt three days* (Exodus 10:22).[73]

“On the second day He created the firmament to divide water from water, as is written: *God said*, ‘*Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide water from water*’ (Genesis 1:6). And the blessed Holy One stipulated with them that water should divide between defilement and purity for Israel, enabling them to be purified.[74]

“On the third day He made the land emerge from the water and gathered the waters into one place, making that gathering into the sea. He stipulated with the sea to allow Israel to pass through it on dry land and to drown the Egyptians. And so it happened, as is written: *The sea returned, toward morning*, לאיתנו (*le-eitano*), *to its powerful flow* (Exodus 14:27)—do not read *le-eitano*, but rather לתנאו (*li-tna’o*), to its stipulation, to what the blessed Holy One stipulated with it in the act of Creation. He further stipulated with the earth that it would open its mouth during the dispute of Korah and swallow Korah and his

whole community, as is written: *The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them* (Numbers 16:32).[75]

"On the fourth day He created the sun and the moon, as is written: *God said, 'Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven'* (Genesis 1:14), and He stipulated with the sun that it would stand in the middle of heaven in the days of Joshua, [199a] as is written: *The sun stood in the middle of heaven* (Joshua 10:13). He stipulated with the stars to wage war against Sisera, as is written: *The stars from their courses fought against Sisera* (Judges 5:20).[76]

"On the fifth day He created the fish of the sea and the birds of heaven. He stipulated with the birds that ravens would feed Elijah when he restrained the heavens, as is written: *The ravens I have commanded* [*to sustain you there*] (1 Kings 17:4)—precisely! He stipulated with the fish of the sea that one fish would be appointed to swallow Jonah and to cast him out.[77]

"On the sixth day He created Adam, and stipulated with him that a woman would issue from him who would feed Elijah, as is written: *Behold, I have commanded a widow* [*there to sustain you*] (1 Kings 17:9)—*Behold, I have commanded* on the day that the world was created.[78]

"Similarly with every single phenomenon that emerges in the world, the blessed Holy One has commanded it on the day that the world was created. Here too, *YHVH spoke to the fish*, [*and it vomited Jonah onto dry land*] (Jonah 2:11)—*spoke* to it in the six days of Creation.

"Here, as well, we find an allusion to the actions of a human being in this world. Jonah, descending into the ship, is the human soul descending into this world to enter a human body. Why is she called יונה (*Yonah*), Jonah? Because as soon as she joins the body, she is *yonah*, cheated, in this world, as is said: ולא תונו (*Ve-lo tonu*), *You shall not cheat, one another* (Leviticus 25:17). Then a person moves through this world like a ship in the great ocean about to break up, as is said: *The ship threatened to break up* (Jonah 1:4).[79]

“When a person is in this world he sins, and thinks that he can flee from the presence of his Lord, who pays no attention to this world. Then the blessed Holy One casts a mighty windstorm—the Decree of Judgment, which stands constantly before the blessed Holy One, demanding a person’s punishment. This is what torments the ship, calling attention to the person’s sins, to seize him.[80]

“Once the person is seized by that tempest, in his sickbed, what is written? *Jonah went down into the hold of the ship, and he lay down and fell asleep* (Jonah 1:5). Even though a person is lying in his sickbed, the soul is not aroused to return to his Lord to redeem his sins.

“What is written? *The captain approached him* (Jonah 1:6). Who is *the captain*? The good impulse, who guides all. *And said to him, ‘What are you doing sound asleep?…’* (ibid.)—this is no time to sleep, for you are being brought to judgment for all that you have done in this world. Repent of your sins![81]

“‘Reflect on these things and return to your Lord. *What is your work* (Jonah 1:8), in which you engaged in this world? Confess it before your Lord. *Where do you come from?* (ibid.)—reflect on where you come from: from a putrid drop, and you will not be arrogant before Him. *What is your country?* (ibid.)—reflect that from earth you were created and to earth you will return. *And of what people are you?* (ibid.)—reflect whether you have ancestral merit to protect you.’[82]

“Once he is brought to heavenly judgment, that tempest—which is the Decree of Judgment raging against a person—demands from the King to punish those royal prisoners, and they all come before Him one by one. At that moment, the members of the court approach. Some plead in his defense, others against him, and the Decree of Judgment demands punishment.

“If that person is not found innocent, what is written? *The men rowed hard to regain the shore, but they could not*

(Jonah 1:13)—those who pleaded for his innocence strive to restore him to this world, *but they could not*. Why? *For the sea was growing stormier* (ibid.)—the Decree of Judgment grows stormier from the person's sins and overwhelms them.[83]

"Then three appointed messengers descend upon him: one who inscribes all the good deeds and misdeeds that the person performed in this world; one who produces a reckoning of his days; and one who was with him in his mother's womb, as we have established. And the Decree of Judgment does not subside until the time that is described: *They picked Jonah up* (Jonah 1:15). *They picked up*—when they carry him from his house to the cemetery.[84]

"Then proclamation is made concerning him. If he is righteous, the proclamation is: 'Render honor to the image of the King! *Let him enter into peace; let them rest* [*on their couches—he who walks uprightly!*] (Isaiah 57:2).' How do we know? As is written: *Your righteousness will march before you* (ibid. 58:8). [199b] If he is wicked, the proclamation is: 'Woe to so-and-so! Better for him if he had never been created!'[85]

"Then what is written? *They threw him into the sea, and the sea ceased its raging* (Jonah 1:15)—when they place him in his grave, the place of judgment, then the Decree of Judgment, that was storming, subsides from its raging. And the fish that swallowed him is the grave.

"What is written? *Jonah was in the belly of the fish* (Jonah 2:1). *The belly of the fish* is the belly of Sheol. How do we know? As is written: *From the belly of Sheol I cried out* (ibid., 3)—he was in the belly of the fish and called it *the belly of Sheol*.

"*Three days and three nights* (Jonah 2:1)—the three days that a person lies in the grave, when his belly bursts. After three days, that filth is ejected onto his face, exclaiming to him, 'Take what you put into me! You ate and drank every day and gave nothing to the poor; all your days

were like feasts and holidays, while the poor were hungry because they didn't eat with you. Take what you put into me!' As is written: *I will spread dung upon your faces*, [*the dung of your feasts*] (Malachi 2:3), and we have established this.[86]

"Afterward, from three days on, a person is punished for his eyes, for his hands, and for his feet—as they have established, until a month of days. Throughout those thirty days, soul and body are punished as one; and therefore the soul remains below on earth, not ascending to her place, like a woman sitting outside during all the days of her impurity.[87]

"Afterward, the soul ascends, while the body decomposes in the dust, until the time when the blessed Holy One arouses the dead. A voice is destined to arise among the graves, proclaiming: *Awake and shout for joy, O dwellers of the dust!* (Isaiah 26:19). When will this be? When the Angel of Death will be eliminated from the world, as is written: *He will swallow up death forever*... (ibid. 25:8). Once He *swallows up death forever*, then *YHVH Elohim will wipe away tears from all faces and remove the disgrace of His people*... (ibid.). Of then, it is written: *YHVH spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land* (Jonah 2:11).[88]

"After that voice is aroused among the graves, every single grave will spew out the corpse it contains, as is written: *The earth* רפאים תפיל (*refa'im tappil*), *will cast forth spirits of the dead* (Isaiah 26:19). What does *tappil, will cast forth*, mean? That it will spew them out. *Refa'im*—what does that mean? That they have been healed as before, bone to bone; they are called *refa'im, healed*.[89]

"Now, you might say, 'But of the other nations is written *Refa'im*, *Spirits of the dead, they will never rise* (Isaiah 26:14)!' Well, surely the bones of the whole world will be healed in their graves, but some of them will rise and some of them will not. Of this is written *Refa'im, healed, they will never rise*. Happy is the share of Israel![90]

“In this fish we find words of healing for the whole world. This fish, as soon as it swallowed Jonah, died; and Jonah was inside of it for three days. Afterward it was restored, and vomited Jonah out. As we have established, for it is written: *Jonah prayed to YHVH his God from the belly of* הדגה (*ha-dagah*), *the fish* (Jonah 2:2). Here is written *ha-dagah, the fish*, and there is written *Ha-dagah, The fish, that were in the Nile died* (Exodus 7:21), as we have established. Similarly, the earth will awaken first, and then *the earth will cast forth refa’im, the healed* (Isaiah 26:19).”[91]

The Companions came and kissed his head.

Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, saying, [200a] “*Take from yourselves an offering for YHVH*… (Exodus 35:5). Come and see: When the blessed Holy One created the world, He did so only so Israel would come and receive the Torah. By Torah the world was created, and upon Torah it is established, as is written: *Were it not for My covenant with day and night, I would not have established the laws of heaven and earth* (Jeremiah 33:25).[92]

“Torah is length of life in this world and length of life in the world that is coming. Whoever engages in Torah engages, as it were, in the palace of the blessed Holy One, for the supernal palace of the blessed Holy One is Torah. When a person occupies himself with Torah, the blessed Holy One stands there and listens to his voice, as is written: *YHVH listened attentively* (Malachi 3:16). And that person is saved from three judgments: the judgment of this world, the judgment of the Angel of Death, who has no power over him, and the judgment of Hell.[93]

“*A book of remembrance* (Malachi, ibid.). Who is that? Well, there is a book above, and there is a book below. *Remembrance*—site of holy Covenant, who absorbs and gathers all life above. *A book of remembrance*—two rungs that are one, one mystery. Name of *YHVH*—Name is one, *YHVH* is one, and all is one entity. For there is a name, and there is

a name. A name above, called ‘name of the unknown,’ of what is not hinted by knowledge at all; this is called ‘upper point.’ A name below, called ‘name *from one end of heaven to the other end of heaven* (Deuteronomy 4:32),’ for *the other end of heaven* is called *remembrance*, and this name is the point below, which is a name for that *remembrance*, which is *the other end of heaven*, absorbing all life above, and this is *the end of heaven* below. This point is a book, susceptible בחושבנא (*be-ḥushbana*), to calculation—this is שמו ולחושבי (*ul-ḥoshevei shemo*), *and those who contemplate His name* (Malachi, ibid.). The book that we have mentioned and the name are one entity in all aspects.[94]

“This point, being situated in the middle, is above all those joined to it. Six aspects are joined to the upper book above them; six aspects are joined to the lower book, who is above them. Upper book, lower book, all called Torah. What is the difference between one and the other? Well, the upper book is תורה שבכתב (*Torah she-bi-khtav*), Written Torah, for it is sealed, existing only *bi-khtav*, in writing, for there is the place for it to be revealed below. Who is that? The World that is Coming. The lower book is the Torah called תורה שבעל פה (*Torah she-be-al peh*), Oral Torah. Who is *al peh*, on the mouth? These are chariots below, upon which She stands. Since they are not included in the writing above, they are called *al peh*, Oral; and this Torah stands *al peh*, on the mouth, for it is written: *From there it divides and becomes four* (Genesis 2:10).[95]

“Although upper Torah stands above, it is not called על הכתב (*al ha-ketav*), on the writing; rather, it stands בכתב (*bi-khtav*), in the writing—that writing is made into a palace for it, and it stands within that palace and is concealed there. So it is called *Torah she-bi-khtav*, Torah in the writing, and not *al ha-ketav*, on the writing.[96]

“But Torah below stands upon Her chariots, and is called *al peh*, on the mouth, for She stands upon them. Since they are not considered within, in the category of writing,

they do not form a palace for this point, as with the supernal point. And since She stands upon them, She is called תרומה (*terumah*), raised offering.[97]

"Further, I heard from the Holy Lamp: תרומה (*Terumah*), *an offering* (Exodus 35:5). What is *terumah*? As we have established: תרי ממאה (*terei mi-me'ah*), two out of a hundred. Come and see: All those holy rungs in mystery of faith, by which the blessed Holy One is revealed, are ten rungs, ten utterances, as has been established; and these ten amount to a hundred. When we have to raise this lower point, we must not take Her by Herself, but rather with Her Husband, and they are *terei*, two, of those *me'ah*, hundred, that we have mentioned. For one must not separate them at all, but rather unite Her with Her Husband. Therefore She is called *terumah*, *an offering*, in one entirety.[98]

"Come and see: Every day a herald proclaims: 'Inhabitants of the world! This matter depends upon you! [200b] *Take from yourselves an offering for YHVH* (Exodus 35:5).'[99]

"Now, if you say that this is difficult for you, *Everyone whose heart impels him shall bring her* (ibid.). What does *shall bring her* mean? Well, from here we learn a mystery about prayer—the prayer of a person who reveres his Lord and arranges an array above, as we have established. With song and praise—at first, by those songs and praises chanted by supernal angels above and by the series of praises chanted below, She adorns Herself and is arrayed like a woman adorning herself for her husband.[100]

"By the order of prayer—arrangement of the prayer recited seated—Her maidens and all Her retinue are arrayed, all adorning themselves along with Her. After all is prepared and arranged, when we reach 'True and firm,' all are arrayed—She and Her maidens—until we reach 'who has redeemed Israel.' Then all must stand erect. For when a person reaches 'True and firm' and all is prepared, Her maidens convey Her, and She conveys Herself to the

supernal King. Once we reach ‘who has redeemed Israel,’ the supernal King moves with His rungs and comes out to receive Her. We must stand erect before the supernal King in awe and trembling, for then He stretches the right arm toward Her, and then His left, placing it beneath Her head; then they embrace, kissing, as one. These are the first three. And a person should devote his heart, focusing on all these arrangements and this sequence of prayer—his mouth, his heart, and his aspiration as one.[101]

“Now that the supernal King and *Matronita* are in the bliss of those kisses, whoever needs to submit a request, let him do so, for this is a time of favor. Once a person has made his request before the King and *Matronita*, he should prepare himself—in his will and his heart—for the last three, to arouse delight of secrecy; for by these three She is blessed with another cleaving. One should prepare himself to leave their presence, leaving them in the hidden joy of these three. Still, his intention should be that those below may be blessed by those blessings of secret joy.[102]

“Then one must fall on his face and surrender his soul, when She grasps souls and spirits; then is the moment to surrender his soul among those souls She is grasping, for then the bundle of life is fitting.[103]

“This word I heard among mysteries of the Holy Lamp, and I was not permitted to reveal it—except to you, supernal saints! If, at the moment when She grasps souls and spirits in desire of single cleaving, one sets his heart and aspiration on this, offering his soul in the cleaving of that aspiration, to merge it in that cleaving; if it is accepted at that moment in the desire for those souls, spirits, and soul-breaths that She is grasping—then this is a person who is bound in the bundle of life in this world and in the world that is coming.[104]

“Furthermore, *Matronita* must be encompassed on all sides, above and below, and be crowned with souls from all sides—crowned with souls from above and crowned with

souls from below. If a person focuses his heart and will on all this and surrenders his soul from below in cleaving of aspiration, as has been said, then the blessed Holy One calls him Peace below, corresponding to that Peace above—the one who blesses *Matronita*, encompassing Her and crowning Her on all sides. Here too, the blessed Holy One calls this person Peace, as is said: *YHVH called him Peace* (Judges 6:24). All his days, he is called so above: Peace, because he encompassed and crowned *Matronita* below, corresponding to that Peace above.[105]

"When that person departs from this world, his soul ascends and splits all those heavens, and no one can hinder him. The blessed Holy One proclaims, *Let Peace enter!* (Isaiah 57:2), and *Shekhinah* says, *Let them rest upon their couches* (ibid.). Twelve gates of pure balsam are opened for him, [201a] and no one can hinder him. So, happy is one who sets his heart and will on this! Of this is written *Everyone whose heart impels him shall bring her* (Exodus 35:5) to the supernal King, as has been said."[106]

Rabbi Abba raised his voice and said, "Woe, Rabbi! Woe, Rabbi Shim'on! You are among the living, yet I weep for you. Not for you do I weep, but for the Companions I weep and for the world I weep. Rabbi Shim'on is a sparkling lamp, beaming above and beaming below. By the light that he kindles below, all inhabitants of the world shine. Woe to the world when the light below vanishes into the light above! Who will radiate the light of Torah to the world?"[107]

He rose and kissed Rabbi Ḥiyya. He said to him, "These words were in your possession, and therefore the blessed Holy One sent me here to join with you!"[108]

Rabbi Yose opened with a verse following him, "*Every wise-hearted one among you shall come and do* [*all that YHVH has commanded*] (Exodus 35:10). This verse has been established, but come and see! When the blessed Holy One

said to Moses, *Get you wise and understanding* [*and knowledgeable*] *men* (Deuteronomy 1:13), he searched throughout Israel and could not find *understanding* ones, as is written: *I took the heads of your tribes, wise and knowledgeable men* (ibid., 15), whereas it is not written *understanding*.[109]

"Now, if you say that *understanding* is a higher rung than *wise*—certainly so! What is the difference between them? As for a *wise* person, they have established that even a student who imparts wisdom to his teacher is called *wise*. A *wise* person knows for himself all that is required. As for an *understanding* person, he includes various rungs: he contemplates all and knows his own mind and that of others. Your mnemonic is: *The righteous one knows the soul of his beast* (Proverbs 12:10); *The righteous one rules the awe of God* (2 Samuel 23:3). And here, *wise-hearted* (Exodus 35:10), precisely! *Wise* in the heart, not elsewhere, inhering in the heart—whereas *understanding*, above and below; the *understanding* one contemplates his own mind and that of others."[110]

He opened, saying, *"He said to me, 'You are My servant*, [*Israel, in whom I glory*] *'* (Isaiah 49:3). Here, referring to the prayer that a person should offer before the blessed Holy One, which is a great and precious devotion among the services of his Lord. There is service of the blessed Holy One based on activity of the body, and this is considered service. Then there is service of the blessed Holy One that is more internal, and this is the essence, for all depends on that inner service, essence of all.[111]

"In the body are twelve members, engaging in bodily activity, as we have established. These are bodily members, and the service of the blessed Holy One by activity depends on them. For the service of the blessed Holy One consists of two aspects: by external members of the body—and there are twelve other, internal members, inside the body. They are mystery of supernal wisdom, known among the

Companions; happy is their share! They are inner configurations within the body, by which the spirit is restored—precious inner service of the blessed Holy One, as we have established in the inner mysteries spoken by Rabbi Shim'on.[112]

"A person's prayer, which is spiritual worship, abides in supernal mysteries, and people do not know! For one's prayer splits the atmosphere, splits the heavens, opens gates, and ascends.

"At the moment when light shines, separating from darkness, a herald moves through all the heavens, proclaiming: 'Prepare, O gatekeepers, masters of palaces—each one at his post!' For those who rule by day are not the same as those who rule by night, and when night enters, the rulers of day are removed and other rulers are appointed over night, these replacing those. This is the mystery of *the great light for dominion of day* [*and the small light for dominion of night*] (Genesis 1:16). *Dominion of day* and *dominion of night* are the rulers appointed over day and the rulers appointed over night—the former are called *dominion of day* and the latter *dominion of night*.[113]

"When night enters, a herald emerges, proclaiming: 'Prepare, O rulers of night, each [201b] one to his place!' And when day shines, a herald emerges, proclaiming: 'Prepare, O rulers of day, each one to his place!' Then the rulers of night withdraw and the rulers of day are installed. When the herald proclaims, every single one is assigned his suitable place.

"Then Holy *Shekhinah* descends, and the people of Israel enter the synagogue to praise their Lord, opening with songs and hymns. For once a person has arrayed himself in adornments of *mitsvah* and holiness, he should unify his heart by ritual service of his Lord and set his heart and will on that service, consisting of words of truth—for the word ascends.[114]

“Those princes standing in the atmosphere are appointed over the four directions of the world. To the east is appointed one prince standing in the air, named Gezardiya, and with him are other officers who await that word of prayer rising through the air, and this prince grasps her. If the word is fitting, he and all those officers kiss that word and ascend with her to the air of the heaven above, where other princes and officers await. When they kiss that word, they open and say, ‘Happy are you, O Israel, who know how to crown your Lord with holy crowns! Happy is the mouth from which this crowning word issues!’[115]

“Then letters standing in the air soar—Holy Name of Twelve Letters—for that name rules the atmosphere. This is the name by which Elijah flew until he ascended to heaven, corresponding to what Obadiah said to Elijah: *The spirit of YHVH will carry you*… (1 Kings 18:12); for by this name Elijah flew through the air, and this is the name ruling the atmosphere.[116]

“Those letters soar, ascending with that word, and that prince—holding the keys of the Master of the atmosphere—and all those other officers ascend with her to heaven, where she is delivered into the hand of another prince to ascend higher.

“To the south there is another prince ruling the atmosphere in that direction, along with numerous princes and officers. His name is Pesagniyah, to whom are attached keys of the atmosphere of that direction. All those sunk in trouble, who pray to their Lord from the midst of trouble with a broken heart—if that word is fitting, she ascends through the air and this prince grasps her and kisses her, for she ascends in that direction. When he kisses her, he opens and says, ‘May the blessed Holy One have mercy upon you, and be filled with compassion for you!’[117]

“All those princes and officers of that direction ascend with her, and letters of the Holy Name soar—for those four crowned letters rule that direction of the atmosphere—and

they ascend in that direction through the air to heaven, to the prince ruling that direction.[118]

"To the north there is another prince, along with numerous officers, ruling the atmosphere, and that prince is named Petaḥyah. This one is appointed over the atmosphere in that direction, and all those who pray to be delivered from enemies assailing them—when a word of that prayer ascends through the air in that direction, if she is worthy, this prince grasps her and kisses her.[119]

"Then a spirit is aroused, emerging from the abyss of the north, and that spirit calls through the entire atmosphere, and they all grasp that word and raise her to heaven, kissing her. They open and say, 'May your Lord cast your enemy down before you!'

"She keeps ascending and splitting firmaments until they ascend with her to the first heaven. The prayer ascends and reaches one prince appointed over the east, where there are nine openings, at which are stationed many officers and many princes, and over them one prince named Zevuliel. This is who wants to serve in this heaven by day, but he is not granted permission until the light of the moon rises; then he brings forth all those legions and officers. When the day shines, they all enter one of those nine openings, the highest of them all. And when the prayer ascends, [202a] she enters that opening, and all those princes and officers emerge—with that chief prince, Zevuliel, over them—and they all come out and kiss her and accompany her to the second heaven.[120]

"Second heaven. The prayer ascends to that heaven, and twelve gates of that heaven are opened. In the twelfth gate stands a prince named Ana'el, who is appointed over numerous legions and camps, and when the prayer ascends this prince proclaims over all those openings: *Open, O gates* (Isaiah 26:2). All those gates open, and the prayer enters them all.[121]

“Then a prince standing to the south is aroused, named Azriel—sometimes named Maḥniel, since he is appointed over six hundred thousand camps, all of them winged, ruling other camps, filled with eyes. By their side stand those camps that are masters of ears—called ‘ears’ because they listen to all those who offer their prayers in a whisper, with heartfelt devotion, a prayer not heard by anyone else. Such a prayer ascends and is heard by all those called ‘masters of ears.’[122]

“If that prayer is heard by human ears, no one above listens to her; no one else listens except for the person who heard her first. Therefore one should be careful that people do not hear that prayer. Furthermore, a word of prayer unites with the upper world, and a word of the upper world must not be heard.[123]

“Similarly, one who reads aloud from the Torah scroll—one reads, and the other should be silent. If two read from the Torah, they diminish faith above. For one voice and utterance are entirely one; two utterances and two voices are diminution of faith—rather, there should be one voice and utterance, so that Voice and Utterance be alone.[124]

“That prince is named Azriel the Elder. When that prayer ascends in a whisper, all those six hundred thousand camps and all those masters of eyes and all those who listen, masters of ears, come out and kiss that ascending word of prayer, as is written: *The eyes of YHVH are upon the righteous, and His ears* [*to their outcry*] (Psalms 34:16). *The eyes of YHVH are upon the righteous*—masters of eyes below, for there are masters of eyes above. *And his ears to their outcry*—masters of ears.[125]

“Third heaven. That prayer ascends and reaches this heaven, where there is a prince named Gedaryah, accompanied by many officers and princes. He ministers three times a day in front of a scepter of radiance emerging and hidden, ascending and descending, never staying in one place. This is the moving scepter, and when the prayer

ascends, that scepter descends and bows before her. This heaven is called Heaven of the Scepter.[126]

"When the prayer ascends, that prince—after bowing—strikes with the scepter against a mighty lustrous rock, standing in the middle of that heaven, and from that rock emerge 375 forces, which have been hidden there since the day that Torah descended to earth—because they stubbornly refused to let her descend, so the blessed Holy One rebuked them and they entered that rock, from which they never emerge except when a prayer ascends. They open and say, *'YHVH our Lord, how majestic is Your name* [*throughout the earth*]*! You have set Your splendor* [*above the heavens*]*!* (Psalms 8:2). This is a prayer that rises above all those heavens!' Then they bow to her.[127]

"From here on, the prayer is adorned with supernal crowns and ascends into the fourth heaven. Then the sun comes forth on its rungs, and the chief prince Shamshiel emerges, accompanied by 365 camps called 'days of the sun,' and they all adorn that prayer with crowns of spices from the Garden of Eden. There the prayer lingers until all those camps ascend with her into the fifth heaven, where there is a prince named Gadriel, in charge of wars waged by other nations. When the prayer ascends, he and all his camps tremble and their power is broken. [202b] They come out and bow and adorn that prayer, and ascend with her until they reach the sixth heaven. Then many legions and camps emerge, welcoming that prayer, and they ascend with her until they reach seventy gates, where there stands a prince named Anpiel, chief prince, and he adorns that prayer with seventy crowns.[128]

"Once the prayer is adorned with all these crowns, all those legions of all the heavens join together and raise that prayer, crowned on all sides, toward the seventh heaven. Then the prayer enters, and Sandalphon—supreme, glorious master, who possesses all his Lord's keys—conducts that prayer into seven palaces.[129]

“These seven palaces are palaces of the King, and when this prayer, adorned with all these crowns, enters, he unites them as one, to become a crown above, so that all may be one fittingly. The name of the blessed Holy One is crowned on all sides, above and below, becoming one, and of that moment is written *Blessings upon the head of the righteous one* (Proverbs 10:6). Happy is the share of a person who knows how to arrange his prayer fittingly![130]

“Concerning this prayer, with which the blessed Holy One is crowned—He waits until all the prayers of Israel are concluded; then all is fittingly complete, above and below. Until here, words conveying supernal mysteries. From here on, commandments of Torah based on words, as well as on action.[131]

“These are six commandments based also on prayer. One, *to be in awe of this honored and awesome Name* (Deuteronomy 28:58). Second, *to love Him* (ibid. 10:12). Third, to bless Him. Fourth, to unify Him. Fifth, for the priest to bless the people. Sixth, to surrender one’s soul to Him. These are six commandments based on words of prayer, aside from those commandments based on action, such as tzitzit and tefillin.[132]

“*To be in awe of the Name* (Deuteronomy 28:58). This commandment pertains to those praises uttered by King David and to those sacrifices mentioned in Torah, for there a person should be in awe of his Lord, since those songs abide in the place called Awe—and all those Hallelujahs, which are mystery of the awe of the blessed Holy One. A person should direct his will to those songs in awe, and the Companions have established all the mysteries of those songs and praises and of those Hallelujahs.[133]

“Once a person reaches *Yishtabbaḥ*, May [Your name] be blessed, he should direct his will to blessing the blessed Holy One, such as in *Yotser or*, Who forms light, and *Yotser ha-me’orot*, Who forms the luminaries.[134]

"*To love* (Deuteronomy 10:12)—when one reaches *Ahavat olam*, Eternal love, and *Ve-ahavta, You shall love, YHVH your God* (ibid. 6:5). This is mystery of love of the blessed Holy One, as we have established.[135]

"To unify Him—*Hear, O Israel! YHVH our God, YHVH is one* (Deuteronomy 6:4). For here is the unification of the blessed Holy One, unifying His Name fittingly with heartfelt devotion. From there on, recalling the Exodus from Egypt, which is an explicit commandment, as is written: *You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt* (ibid. 5:15).[136]

"For the priest to bless the people—so that Israel may coalesce when they receive blessings above. For at that moment Assembly of Israel receives blessings, and it is a time of favor.[137]

"To surrender one's soul to Him, to offer one's soul with a willing heart—when we fall on our faces and say, *To You, YHVH, I lift up my soul* (Psalms 25:1); for one should direct his heart and will toward Him, surrendering his soul in complete devotion.[138]

"These are six commandments based on prayer, ascending toward six hundred commandments of Torah. Now, you might say, 'Thirteen others additionally!' Well, they exist to draw the thirteen attributes of Compassion, encompassing all.[139]

"These six commandments, by which prayer is crowned —happy is the share of one who directs his heart and will to this, perfecting [203a] them every day! Upon these depend many others. But when one reaches these places, he must focus his heart and will to fulfill the commandment inherent in that word. Then, this proclamation resounds: *He said to me, 'You are My servant, Israel, in whom I glory'* (Isaiah 49:3)."[140]

Rabbi Abba came and kissed him.

Rabbi Yitsḥak opened, following him, saying, "*Moses assembled the whole community of the Children of Israel*… (Exodus 35:1). Why did he assemble them? To give them the Sabbath, as before. For at first, before Israel made the Golden Calf, he gave them the Sabbath, and this is what that mixed multitude did not keep. As soon as they heard *Between Me and the Children of Israel* (Exodus 31:17), they said, 'This is withheld from us!' Immediately *the people assembled against Aaron* [*and said to him, "Rise up, make us gods that will go before us"*] (ibid. 32:1), and many were drawn after them. After those who died passed away, Moses assembled the Children of Israel alone and gave them the Sabbath as before, as is written: *Six days shall work be done, and on the seventh day* [*there shall be holiness for you, an absolute Sabbath for YHVH*] (Exodus 35:2).[141]

"*You shall not kindle fire in all your dwellings* (ibid., 3). Here is mystery of mysteries for those who know supernal wisdom. The mystery of Sabbath has already been established by the Companions, but this mystery has been transmitted to the supernal wise ones, for Sabbath is a supreme mystery.

"Come and see: When, on the sixth day, the time of evening approaches, a single star shines from the north, accompanied by seventy other stars. The star strikes those other stars, and they are all absorbed in that star—becoming one, totality of seventy. That star expands, becoming like a pyre, blazing in all directions. Then that pyre expands around a thousand mountains, extending like an encircling thread.[142]

"This flaming pyre attracts other colors from within it. The first color is green. Once this color appears, the flaming pyre ascends and leaps up over that green color, plunges into it, and expels that green color. The green stands outside, with that flaming pyre of the star encompassed within.

“Afterward it attracts another color, white, and that white enters within. Once this color appears, that flaming pyre of the star ascends, expels that white, and enters within. Similarly, with all those colors until it expels them and enters within, approaching that hidden point to absorb light.”[143]

He opened, saying, “*I looked, and here, a stormy wind* [*coming from the north*]… (Ezekiel 1:4). Ezekiel saw this vision in an arrangement existing only when this star rules, as we have said. But this verse has been established. *And here, a stormy wind*—they have established that it came to conquer the whole world before wicked Nebuchadnezzar. But this *stormy wind* is that star that we have mentioned, which swallows seventy other stars. And this is the *stormy wind* that Elijah saw: *splitting mountains and smashing rocks* (1 Kings 19:11). This is what exists constantly before all, protecting what is within, like a shell for the kernel. Why is it called *stormy*? Because it storms against all, above and below.[144]

“*Coming from the north* (Ezekiel 1:4)—for it comes from that direction. Your mnemonic is: *From the north evil will be let loose* (Jeremiah 1:14), for various other aspects are joined with that *stormy wind*, and so it comes out of *the north*, because this is dross of gold, adhering to the north side. This is the central point abiding in desolation; and since it knows how to seduce, it rules within the point of habitation, dominating all affairs of the inhabited world, except for the land of Israel when Israel dwelled there. After Israel sinned, it ruled over the Holy Land, for it is written: *He has withdrawn His right hand* (Lamentations 2:3).[145]

“*A great cloud* (Ezekiel 1:4)—cloud of darkness, darkening the whole world. Come and see: What is the difference between one cloud and another? The cloud [203b] of which is written *For the cloud of YHVH was over them by day* (Numbers 10:34) and *Your cloud stands over*

them (ibid. 14:14), is one that shines radiantly; all lights appear within that cloud. But this cloud is a dark cloud, not shining at all; rather impeding all lights, which cannot appear in its presence.[146]

"*Great* (Ezekiel 1:4)—why is it called great, when in fact it is small? Well, it is *great* when it rules. Alternatively, *great*—that darkness is *great* once it covers all lights, which become invisible in its presence, and it is greater than anything in the world.[147]

"*And flashing fire* (Ezekiel 1:4)—fire from which harsh Judgment never departs.

"*And a radiance surrounding it* (ibid.)—even though all this exists within it, *a radiance surrounding it*. From here we learn that although this side is nothing but the side of impurity, there is *a radiance surrounding it* and one must not thrust it away. Why? Because there is *a radiance surrounding it*—it has an aspect of holiness and one should not treat it with disdain. Therefore one should give it a share in the side of holiness.[148]

"Rav Hamnuna Sava said as follows: Is there *a radiance surrounding it*? One should treat it with disdain. This *radiance* is within, not extending outside; and since that *radiance* is within, it is written *and from within it, like the color of amber* (Ezekiel 1:4)—*from within* what? *From within* that *radiance*. *Like the color of* החשמל (*ha-ḥashmal*), *amber*—חש מל (*ḥash mal*), as they have established: דאשא ממללן חיוון (*ḥeivan de-isha memallelan*), fiery beings speaking.[149]

"But from the Holy Lamp I have heard mystery of mysteries. When foreskin settles on holy Covenant, defiling the sanctuary, then that sanctuary is prevented from revealing the mystery of the sign of Covenant within the foreskin. When this *radiance* enters within, separating foreskin from the sanctuary, it is called חש מל (*ḥash mal*)—*ḥash*, quickly, revealed; *mal*. What is *mal*? As is said: *Joshua* מל (*mal*), *circumcised* (Joshua 5:4)—mystery of the sign of Covenant,

not prevented from being revealed from within the foreskin.[150]

"There is another mystery, for its light is seen and unseen, and when *ḥashmal* is revealed, its light disappears. But the first mystery fits the mystery of the verse well, though all is fine and fitting.[151]

"With this *radiance*, he seduces the Woman to absorb light. Of this is written *Her palate is smoother than oil* (Proverbs 5:3). He placed that light facing the Covenant, and so he seduces Her, absorbing the light. This is the seduction he performs upon the Woman, and it is written *The lips of an alien drip honey* (ibid.).[152]

"Come and see: On the sixth day, as evening approaches, that flaming pyre leaps, ascending to enter colors. Then the people of Israel prepare below, arranging a meal and setting tables. A single flame then darts out and strikes that pyre. Once it strikes, that flame and that pyre spin, entering the hollow of the great abyss, where they are concealed.[153]

"That flame is from the right side; and being from the right side, it removes that pyre and conducts it into the hollow of the great abyss, where it sits until Sabbath departs. As soon as Sabbath departs, the people of Israel must recite a blessing over the fire; and that flame issues, by the blessing below, and dominates that pyre all night long, so the pyre is subdued.[154]

"As soon as Sabbath enters and that pyre is concealed, all fires of harsh Judgment are concealed and subdued—even the fire of Hell, and the wicked of Hell have rest. All, above and below, have rest. When Sabbath departs and they recite a blessing over the fire, all the fires that are concealed emerge, every single one to its place. In order not to arouse another place, it is written *You shall not kindle fire* [*in all your dwellings on the Sabbath day*] (Exodus 35:3), as they have established.[155]

“Why the fire of the altar? Well, when Sabbath enters, a herald proclaims through all the heavens: ‘Prepare, O chariots! Prepare, O camps, to greet your Lord!’ Then a spirit issues from the south, and that spirit spreads [204a] over all those forces and camps of the right side, which clothe themselves in it. That spirit is called ‘the precious garment of Sabbath.’ Then the table of this world is arranged in a certain palace. Happy is the share of the person whose arranged table appears there fittingly—standing unashamed, each person according to his means![156]

“As Sabbath enters, the Holy People must wash themselves of weekday functioning. Why? Because during the weekdays another spirit goes roaming and settles upon the world, and when a person wants to leave that spirit and enter another, holy supernal spirit, he should wash himself so that the supernal holy spirit may settle upon him.[157]

“Come and see mystery of the matter. All those six days the matter persists, for all is joined with mystery of a single sacred point, with which all those days are joined. There are other days standing outside, on the Other Side, and another six days standing within the holy circle, joined with the holy point.[158]

“Holy Israel and all those who engage in holiness all days of the week are joined, all those six days, with those six days within, which are joined with that point—joined with this to be protected. All those six days of the week that point is concealed. As soon as Sabbath enters, that point ascends and is adorned and displayed above, all of them concealed within Her.[159]

“Come and see: There are days, and then there are days! Weekdays, as has been said: these stand outside for other nations. Days of Sabbath, which are days of the week, exist for Israel.[160]

“When this point ascends, all is hidden away, while She ascends. Once She ascends, She is called שבת (*Shabbat*),

Sabbath. What is *Shabbat*? If you say, 'This is due to שביתה (*shevitah*), rest, as is written: *for on it He rested* (Genesis 2:3)'—that is fine. But mystery of the matter: When this point ascends and light shines, She is crowned with the Patriarchs. Once crowned with the Patriarchs, She unites with them, becoming one, and all is called *Shabbat*. שבת (*Shabbat*)—ש (*shin*), בת (*bat*), daughter. *Shin*, as has been established: mystery of three Patriarchs, uniting with the only *bat*, daughter. She delights in them, and they in the World that is Coming, and all is one. This is ש בת (*shin bat*), all becoming one.[161]

"Now, you might say, 'The Great *Shabbat*—and that is above!' Certainly so! Mystery of the matter: Everywhere the point, which is essence of the whole eye, is called בת (*bat*), as is said: *Guard me like the apple, bat, the pupil of, the eye* (Psalms 17:8). Being the essential point of the whole eye, it is called *bat*. The World that is Coming is a palace for the supernal point, and when She rises and carries the Patriarchs upon Her wings, to be crowned above, all is called *Shabbat*. When the Patriarchs are crowned above within the supernal point, it is called *Shabbat*. The lower point, when crowned with the Patriarchs, is called *Shabbat*.[162]

"This lower point ascends and is displayed and adorned. Then total joy appears above and below, and all worlds are in bliss. On this night the point scatters light and spreads its wings over the world; all alien powers disappear, and protection hovers over the world. Then a spirit of soul is added to Israel, upon every single one; and by that additional soul, they forget all sadness and anger—there is nothing but joy above and below.[163]

"That spirit descending, added to inhabitants of the world—as it descends, it is bathed in perfumes of the Garden of Eden, and then descends and settles upon the Holy People. As that spirit descends, sixty chariots descend with it into the Garden of Eden, crowned on six sides. As it

reaches the garden, all those spirits and souls in the Garden of Eden arouse that spirit. They open and say, ‘Happy are you, O Israel, Holy People, for Your Lord’s desire is aroused [204b] toward you!’[164]

“Mystery of mysteries for those who know wisdom. Happy are they when this spirit is aroused! This spirit is an extension of that point, issuing from it, spreading through the world. That is the mystery of Sabbath, settling below; so of this is written ‘keeping’: *The Children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath* (Exodus 31:16)—as they have established: It is not written השבת (*ha-shabbat*), *the Sabbath*, but rather את השבת (*et ha-shabbat*), to include that spirit settling upon all. One must guard it, since it is present with him, and of this is written *all who keep the Sabbath* (Isaiah 56:6).[165]

“Within this mystery is another mystery. This spirit partakes on this day in the pleasure and delight of Israel—being given delight of food and drink three times in three meals of three rungs of faith, as they have established; so this one obtains joy and delight through those meals of Israel. Happy is the share of one who gladdens and delights it on this day![166]

“All six days this spirit derives pleasure from the supernal spirit of Ancient of all Ancients. On Sabbath, once it descends and bathes toward evening in the Garden of Eden, it partakes in delight of the body through meals of faith, and this spirit is crowned above and below, appearing on all sides in upper and lower crowns. Since it abides with a person, he must guard it.[167]

“This spirit is an extension of that point. When holiness and blessing are added to that point from above, this extension is entirely illumined and becomes a spirit shining in all directions, diffusing above and diffusing below. This is what is written: *Between Me and the Children of Israel* (Exodus 31:17)—we share an inheritance as one. The upper portion is crowned on this day with sublime holy delight, enjoying supernal splendor. The lower portion is crowned

on this day with delight below, enjoying these meals. Therefore one should delight it with food and drink, with total joy, with splendid clothes.[168]

"When this portion below is crowned and kept fittingly, it ascends and unites with that other portion, and this point receives all, from above and from below, enveloped on all sides. Since She is adorned on Sabbath from above and below, She gives power to all other days and is given dominion from above and below. This is found in the mysteries of the Book of Solomon and has been established by the Holy Lamp. Happy is the share of Israel![169]

"It is written: ויִנָּפַשׁ (*Va-yinnafash*), *and He was refreshed* (Exodus 31:17), and they established it: וי נפש (*vai nefesh*), 'Woe for the soul, that is lost!' This is fine; but if so, one should say 'Woe for the body,' since it has lost the soul. However, mystery of the matter: In the human being is a soul that draws and receives this spirit on Sabbath eve, and that spirit settles within the soul, dwelling there throughout the Sabbath day. So that soul is greatly enhanced. Thus we have learned: All souls of Israel are crowned on the Sabbath day, and their crown consists of this spirit that dwells within them. As soon as Sabbath departs, *Vai nefesh*, Woe for the soul, that has lost that crown, that holy energy within it! This is שבת (*shavat*), *ceased* (Exodus 31:17)—as soon as *shabbat*, Sabbath, disappears above, then *vai nefesh*, Woe for the soul, for losing what it has lost![170]

"The conjugal duty of the wise, who know supernal mysteries, is from Sabbath eve to Sabbath eve, as they have established.[171] However, concerning this matter, I asked the Holy Lamp, for we see that this lower crown gathers what it gathers by day, and at night gives to all forces, as has been established, for it is written: *She rises while it is night* [*and provides food for her household and a portion for her maidens*] (Proverbs 31:15)—gathering by day and

giving by night. Yet now, Master, you say that coupling occurs on this night.[172]

"He replied, 'Surely coupling occurs on this night. Why? Because this night distributes souls to all those [205a] wise ones who know mysteries of wisdom. Joining and coupling do not occur on another day with a rush of joy, unrestrained—only because of this: because of those souls that She distributes fittingly among the wise, righteous, and pious.[173]

"'Furthermore, every single night coupling surely occurs. When? At midnight, as we have established. But in all aspects, the wise who know mysteries should arrange their conjugal performance on this night. Why? Because on all days of the week they have another spirit, settling upon the world, while on this night they have another, holy supernal spirit, descending to the holy children—a spirit wafting from the Holy Ancient of all Ancients, descending into the lower point, conveying rest for all. This diffuses in all directions, above and below, as is said: *between Me and the Children of Israel* (Exodus 31:17).[174]

"'When the wise are dwelling within the holy spirit, supernal spirit, they should perform in bed, for this spirit draws down all those holy souls, and by this spirit holy ones of the Highest transmit high holy souls to their children fittingly.'[175]

"As soon as this spirit settles upon the world, all evil spirits and all evil accusers vanish from the world, and we need not pray for protection, because the people of Israel are protected by that spirit, and the canopy of peace spreads her wings over them, so they are totally safe.[176]

"Now, you might say, 'But we have learned that a person should not go out alone on the eve of Wednesday or on the eve of Sabbath and one must be on guard. And yet we just said that on Sabbath eve people are protected from all accusers of the world and need not pray for protection!'[177]

“Come and see: Certainly so! On the eve of Wednesday we must beware of them. Why? Because it is written: *Let there be* מאורות (*me’orot*), *lights* (Genesis 1:14), and they have established: מארת (*me’orot*), spelled deficiently, for numerous ravaging bands of dazzling demons are included in this מארת (*me’orot*), and *me’orot* prevail in the waning of the moon, all ruling that night.[178]

“On Sabbath eve, since they all scatter to enter the cavern of dust, unable to rule, a solitary person should beware. Furthermore, although they have no power, they sometimes appear, and a solitary person must beware.[179]

“This is how we have learned the matter; yet if so, the protection is defective! However, on Sabbath there is protection for the Holy People, and as Sabbath enters, the blessed Holy One crowns everyone of Israel, and they should preserve the holy crown with which they are adorned. Although [demons] do not frequent inhabited places, sometimes they appear to a solitary person and his good fortune turns bad. A person must be adorned with the holy crown and guard it![180]

“In any case, there is protection on that night for the Holy People, since the canopy of peace is spread over the world. For we have learned: Wherever the canopy of peace appears, the Other Side does not. So, it constitutes protection, and protection prevails.[181]

“The Sabbath day is joy for all, and all is crowned, above and below. The lower point shines, ascending in beauty of crowns, increased seventy-fold, and Eldest of Elders is aroused. Then, as light ascends, the Holy People hasten to synagogue joyously, adorned with the holy crown from above, in splendid garments, offering praise in songs and hymns with that spirit abiding below. The praises ascend, and those above and below are all in joy, all crowned as one. The upper beings open and say, ‘Happy are you, O Holy People on earth, whose Lord is crowned over you and for whose sake all the holy forces are crowned!’[182]

“This day is a day of souls, not a day of the body, for it is dominion of the bundle of souls, and all those above and below abide in complete [205b] union, in additional sublime holy spirit.[183]

“The Sabbath prayer of the Holy People: three prayers appear on this day, corresponding to three Sabbaths, as has been established, and all of them are one.[184] Once the Holy People enter the synagogue, it is forbidden to engage even in needs of the synagogue, but only with words of praise, prayer, and Torah, fittingly. Whoever occupies himself with other things or worldly matters desecrates Sabbath and has no share in the people of Israel. Two angels are appointed over this on the Sabbath day, and they place their hands on his head and say, ‘Woe to so-and-so, who has no share in the blessed Holy One!’ Therefore they should engage in prayer, song, and praise of their Lord and delve into Torah.[185]

“This day is the day of souls, for that bundle of souls is crowned. So they offer praise of the soul, namely ‘*Nishmat kol ḥai*, The soul of every living being, and the spirit of all flesh.’ Praise is expressed only from the aspect of soul and spirit, and this day subsists on soul and spirit, not on the body.[186]

“Praise of the rung of mystery of the day—holy sun, light of the day, namely *Yotser or*, Who forms light, mystery of radiant light, nourishing and illumining all those forces and chariots, stars and constellations, and all those who rule over the world.[187]

“Praise, on this day, of the World that is Coming, namely *El adon*, ‘God, Master.’ This praise is in the mystery of twenty-two supernal holy letters, crowning the Patriarchs and the upper holy chariot. Small letters are twenty-two letters in the lower world, which are אל ברוך (*El barukh*), Blessed God, with no other space between one word and another, rather a letter inscribed in each word. For the upper world there is space and holy aspects between one letter and another. This is praise upon praise in supernal letters, offered by the

seventh day to the supernal King, who formed the beginning.[188]

"As this praise ascends, sixty supernal chariots await and take this praise from the Holy People, elevating it to crown many chariots appointed over the righteous in the Garden of Eden. They all are adorned with this praise, and all those chariots and all those souls of the righteous ascend with the praise to the mystery of the Throne.[189]

"When this praise of all Israel reaches the holy Throne, it remains there until they recite the supernal *Qedushah* of *musaf*. Then, ascension of below above, uniting all above, above, all becoming one. This is praise transcending all praises.[190]

"From here on, the order of prayer as on other days until *Yismaḥ Mosheh*…, Moses rejoiced…, joy of essential rung of the Patriarchs, rejoicing in His share when the Throne ascends toward Him, and He grasps Her and they join as one. This is joy of Torah delighting in Torah below, joining with one another. When they join as one, a person should include Israel, the Holy People, in that joy. 'Be pleased with our rest.'[191]

"They have already established the mystery of the Torah scroll on this day. We have learned: It is written, *They read from the scroll of the Torah of God, explaining it and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading* (Nehemiah 8:8). As has been established, the mystery of those verse divisions, tonal accents, Masoretic traditions, and all those formal details and supernal mysteries—all was transmitted to Moses on Sinai. If the Torah was given to Moses with all these formal details, then why is the Torah scroll—endowed with all this holiness—lacking all these enhancements and mysteries transmitted to Moses in the Torah?[192]

"Well, this is the mystery: When the holy Throne is crowned and included in Written Torah, all those formal details and all those tonal accents and Masoretic traditions enter secretly and are engraved [206a] upon the holy

Throne. Those are the forms that Written Torah infuses into Oral Torah—by them She conceives, like a woman conceiving from a male, while the upper letters remain alone in their holiness fittingly. And in order to demonstrate in the synagogue that the Throne has been blessed and crowned by mystery of Written Torah, which has infused there all those forms, sanctifying Her, it must appear in its bare letters fittingly. Then all is sanctified in supernal holiness, especially on this day.[193]

"On this day, men constituting mystery of Torah must come up, corresponding to seven voices. On festivals and holidays, five within this mystery; on Yom Kippur, six within this supernal mystery—all one mystery. Five, being five rungs beneath the rung of primordial light, below, mystery of Torah. Six, being six directions—all one mystery, being five. Seven are seven voices; and all of them one mystery, these and those.[194]

"On the new moon, one is added to three on account of the sun, shining then upon the moon, this being mystery of *musaf*.[195]

"With the Torah scroll, one voice and utterance should be heard.[196]

"The arrangement to be prepared by the Holy People on this day and all other days for the Torah scroll: they must arrange a throne called 'a reader's desk,' and that throne should have six steps to ascend and no more, as is written: *There were six steps to the throne* (2 Chronicles 9:18)—and one step above, on which to place the Torah scroll, displaying it for all.[197]

"When the Torah scroll is lifted onto there, the whole people should arrange themselves in awe and fear, trembling and quaking, all below, intending in their hearts as if they were now standing at Mount Sinai to receive the Torah. They should listen and incline their ears. None of the people, nor anyone else, is permitted to open his mouth with a word of Torah, and certainly not with any other word.

Rather, all of them in awe, as if they had no mouth, as has been established, for it is written: *As he opened it, all the people stood up* (Nehemiah 8:5); *and the ears of all the people were attentive to the Torah scroll* (ibid., 3)."[198]

[Rabbi Shim'on said, "When the Torah scroll is taken out to be read in public, heavenly gates of compassion are opened and love is aroused above.[199] One should then say the following:

Blessed is the name of the Master of the universe, blessed is Your crown and Your place. May Your will accompany Your people Israel forever. Show the redemption of Your right hand to Your people in Your Temple, bring us some of the goodness of Your light, and receive our prayer compassionately. May it be Your will to prolong our life in goodness, and may I be counted among the righteous, so that You may have mercy upon me and protect me and all that is mine and that of Your people Israel.

You are the one who nourishes all and sustains all; You are ruler of all, You rule over kings, and kingdom is Yours. I am a servant of the blessed Holy One, before whom I bow. Not in a human do I put my trust, nor in a son of God, but only in the God of heaven, who is God of truth and acts abundantly in goodness and truth. In Him do I trust, and to His holy and glorious name I utter praises. May it be Your will to fulfill the desires of my heart—and the heart of all Your people Israel—for good, for life, and for peace."][200]

"Only one person is allowed to chant the Torah, and all should be silent and hear from his mouth, as if they were receiving it at that moment from Mount Sinai. Another should stand next to the one reading and be silent, so that only one utterance exists, not two. The holy tongue is one—one and not two; if there are two with the Torah scroll, the mystery of faith is diminished, along with the glory of Torah.[201]

“One translator, and this mystery is shell and kernel: mystery of this world and mystery of the world that is coming.[202]

“All are silent while one reads, as is written: *God spoke all these words* (Exodus 20:1)—He above and all the people below, as is written: [206b] *They stood at the foot of the mountain* (ibid. 19:17), and it is written: *Moses went up to God* (ibid., 3).[203]

“The one who reads the Torah should set his heart and will upon those words, and realize that he is the agent of his Lord in arranging these words and conveying them to all the people. He assumes the supernal paradigm. Therefore one who goes up to read the Torah should rehearse those words first at home; and if not, he should not read the Torah. How do we know this? From that utterance: before He proclaimed Torah to the Holy People, what is written? *Then He saw her and declared her; He prepared her and explored her*. Afterward, *He said to the human* (Job 28:27–28).[204]

“Whoever reads the Torah is forbidden to divide the portion differently, even by a single word; rather, he should stop at the place where Moses stopped, completing it for the people. He should not divide the words on this Sabbath according to the portion of another Sabbath.[205]

“This is the mystery: When the portions were divided before the blessed Holy One, every single one was crowned and stood before Him. Once these portions of the whole year had been completely divided and were crowned before Him, and He said, ‘You belong to this particular Sabbath, and you belong to this particular Sabbath’—at that moment He summoned Yofiel, the appointed prince, and fifty-three holy chariots under his command, and He commissioned them to minister to the Torah. He appointed every single chariot: this chariot over the particular portion of one Sabbath, and that particular chariot over the portion of another Sabbath, each one ministering to the Torah on its

own Sabbath. We are forbidden to mix them with one another, or to bring one chariot into contact with its fellow chariot, even by a hairsbreadth or even by one word or even one letter. Rather, every single one as the blessed Holy One divided them, and as He appointed them over those portions, each one at his post.[206]

"Consequently, when a particular portion is crowned, the words of that portion publicly completed ascend, and they are received by the chariot appointed over that portion and raised before the blessed Holy One. Those very words stand before Him and declare, 'I am portion so-and-so, completed by congregation so-and-so in such-and-such a manner.' If it has been completed fittingly, those words ascend and are adorned upon the holy Throne, and that particular chariot ministers to it—each chariot to the portion of each Sabbath, all adorned within the holy Throne—and by them She ascends to unite above, above, becoming one totality. Therefore happy is the share of one who completes the portion of every Sabbath fittingly, as they were divided above![207]

"We read from the Torah scroll twice on Sabbath. At *minḥah* when Judgment looms, toward evening, one must include left in right, for Torah was given from two sides, as is written: *from His right hand, a fiery law for them* (Deuteronomy 33:2)—right and left. Therefore, the Torah scroll at *minḥah*, surely, with ten verses or more, but not the complete portion, since the complete portion pertains only to the right, and the right prevails until the time of *minḥah*, as has been established.[208]

"On Monday and Thursday, because they descend on rungs below, which are totality of Torah. Now, you might say, 'But prophets branch below!' Well, certainly so, but these below are all totality of Torah, every single one containing every single one.[209]

"Mystery of the matter: These supernal rungs are called 'one portion.' Afterward from them emerge nine rungs,

unified as one; and therefore nine men: three on Sabbath at *minḥah* and three on Monday and three on Thursday, totaling nine.[210]

"In the Book of Rav Yeiva Sava: At *minḥah* on Sabbath, mystery of the left is aroused, and the lower point on that left side receives mystery of Torah. At that moment She draws from the side of the left, from which we read. For She abides in mystery [207a] of nine, and we call up nine, namely six on weekdays and three when the left is aroused on Sabbath, to include all as one. She is adorned by them on three sides, corresponding to three supernal sides, totality of the Sabbath portion. Happy is the share of one who attains the glory of Sabbath! Happy is he in this world and in the world that is coming![211]

"It is written: *Let no one go out from his place on the seventh day* (Exodus 16:29). *From his place*—we have learned: What is *his place*? Where it is fitting to walk. Mystery of the matter is as written: *Blessed be the glory of YHVH from His place!* (Ezekiel 3:12); this is *place*, and this is the mystery of what is written: *for the place you are standing on* (Exodus 3:5). There is a well-known site above, which we call *place*, in which supernal Glory is revealed.[212]

"Therefore, a person who is adorned with a holy crown from above is warned not to depart from it. For by speaking of mundane matters, he leaves it and profanes the Sabbath; by his hands, as has been established; by his feet, walking beyond two thousand cubits. All these constitute profanation of Sabbath.[213]

"*Let no one go out from his place* (Exodus 16:29)—the glorious place of holiness, for outside of it lies the place of other gods.[214]

"*Blessed be the glory of YHVH from His place!* (Ezekiel 3:12). *Glory of YHVH*—above. *His place*—glory below, and this is mystery of the Sabbath crown. Therefore, *Let no one go out from his place*. May it be blessed forever and ever![215]

“It is written: *Look, there is a place by Me* (Exodus 33:21). This place is a concealed, hidden place, unknown at all, as implied by what is written: *by Me*, for it is not revealed and remains concealed. This is a supernal place above, above; a supernal palace, concealed and hidden.[216]

“But this is a place below, as we have said. This is *place*—explained above, explained below. Thus, *Let no one go out from his place*.[217]

“*You shall measure outside the town the eastern limit* [*two thousand in cubits*]… (Numbers 35:5). They have already established this in relation to those supernal mysteries. However, *two thousand in cubits*—for She inherits two sides, mysteries on all sides, and She is constantly crowned on two sides, both above and below. Your mnemonic is: *Shekhinah* does not dwell outside the boundary befitting Her.[218]

“As Sabbath departs, Israel below must delay, for it is a great and exalted day, and one must linger with it. For a great and precious guest settles upon him; therefore one should delay, showing that he is not urging the holy guest to leave.[219]

“Then the people of Israel open and say, *Yet He is compassionate* (Psalms 78:38), for this is perfectly fitting on this night, since Judgment returns to its place; whereas it is inappropriate when Sabbath enters, for Judgment withdraws and disappears.[220]

“When the people of Israel begin *May the kindness* [*of YHVH be upon us*] (Psalms 90:17) and *Qedushah de-Sidra*, all the wicked in Hell open and say, ‘Happy are you, O Holy People! Happy are you, O righteous, who observe the commandments of Torah! Woe to those who have failed to observe Torah!’ Then Dumah advances, and a herald is aroused and proclaims, *Let the wicked return to Sheol, all the nations forgetful of God* (Psalms 9:18). All those ravaging bands of dazzling demons harass them in Hell, with no one pitying them. Happy are all those who observe

the Sabbath in this world and delight that joy that settles from above, as we have said.[221]

"If someone fasts on Sabbath, two are aroused against him before the Holy King. One is that supernal spirit, who should be given delight but is not; and the other is that prince in charge of one who fasts, named Sangarya. They ascend before the Holy King and are aroused against him. That spirit ascends deprived of pleasure below, and when this is imperfect below, another spirit above is imperfect. Since imperfection prevails below and above, that person deserves to be cursed and punished. However, because it is perfected another time, and that prince presiding over [207b] fasts is perfected among those other princes in delight above, all decrees issued by those seventy supernal years are torn up.[222]

"Afterward those princes who punish people return and exact retribution from that person because he caused diminution above and below. How can he makes amends? He should sit in fasting over his fast. Why? Since he nullified the joy of Sabbath, let him nullify the joy of a weekday. And if he nullifies the joy of Sabbath yet indulges in weekday joy, he resembles one who values another god more than the blessed Holy One—he fails to delight the supernal holy spirit, Holy of Holies, that settles upon him, renouncing it; yet he values another, weekday spirit that settles afterward on the world, delighting it. Then they return and exact retribution from him in this world and in the world that is coming.[223]

"Therefore another fast is required on the first day of the week, when that weekday spirit settles upon the world. Thereby he is healed, since he disregards the weekday spirit. Your mnemonic is: *He shall return the object that he robbed* (Leviticus 5:23). A robber does not consider the blessed Holy One nor human beings, and therefore he is not punished like a thief; a thief, who considers human beings more than he does the blessed Holy One, is punished in this

world and in the world that is coming. Happy is one who perfects below the upper delight fittingly![224]

"This day is adorned with seventy crowns, and the supernal Holy Name is perfected on all sides, and all those rungs shine. All is in blessed joy, in holiness upon holiness—extra holiness.

"The sanctification of the entrance of Sabbath is the sanctification of the Sabbath of Creation, for it is sanctified by thirty-two paths and three rungs of apples. In this *qiddush* we must mention the principle of the act of Creation and rest, in the mystery of thirty-two paths and three rungs included therein, namely the mystery of testifying to Creation: ויכלו (*Va-ykhullu*), [*The heavens and the earth*] *were completed*… (Genesis 2:1–3), for this testimony contains thirty-five words—thirty-two paths and three rungs of holy apples; three rungs that are *seventh, seventh, seventh* (ibid., 2–3). It includes mystery of upper world, mystery of lower world, and mystery of all faith. Three times, *Elohim*—one, lower world; one, Fear of Isaac; and one, upper world, Holy of Holies. A person should give this testimony in joy, with heartfelt devotion, setting testimony of faith before his Lord. Whoever testifies to this with his heart and will atones for his sins.[225]

“‘Who has sanctified us by His commandments and cherished us, and [given us] His holy Sabbath [as a heritage lovingly and gladly]….’ This sanctification balances perfectly the testimony of faith, consisting of thirty-five other words, as in *Va-ykhullu*. All amounts to seventy words, by which the entrance of Sabbath is adorned. Happy is the share of one who focuses his will upon these words with his cup![226]

“The *qiddush* of the day, as has been established, is: ‘… who creates the fruit of the vine,’ and no more; for this day stands poised to sanctify it—which is not so at night, when we must sanctify it by these words, as we have established. For it is sanctified on this night only by the Holy People below when that supernal spirit settles upon them, and we must sanctify it with heartfelt devotion and focus the mind on this. However, the day itself sanctifies it, while Israel engages in prayer and supplication, and they are sanctified by its holiness on this day. Happy are Israel, the Holy People, who have inherited this day as an eternal heritage![227]

“Once Sabbath has departed, one must separate the holy from the profane. Why? Because permission has now been granted to the deputies below to rule the world and all the world’s affairs. One should demonstrate unity in the holy place within supernal holiness, and separate those below from supernal unification.[228] [208a]

“One should bless over the light of fire, for all other fires are concealed and hidden away on the Sabbath day, except for the single fire of holiness above, which is revealed and included in the holiness of Sabbath. When this fire is revealed, all other fires are concealed from its presence. This is the fire of the Binding of Isaac, blazing on the altar. Therefore one must bless over the light of fire, and this fire must not be weekday fire but rather fire of Sabbath. This fire is fire issuing from fire above; this is fire that endures fire. As soon as this fire is blessed with the

blessing over light, all other fires issue and are assigned to their places and authorized to shine.[229]

"At the moment we bless over fire, four chariots appear, four camps below, to be illumined by that blessed fire, and they are called 'lights of fire.' Therefore we must bend the fingers of the hand—four of the right—and illumine them with the light of the lamp that is blessed. Those fingers allude to the lights of fire shining and ruling from the light of the lamp. Since they are rungs below, when one displays his fingers in the light of the lamp one should bend them before it, because that light rules over them and by it they are illumined. And when we must raise the fingers in other blessings, this is to demonstrate the supreme holiness of supernal rungs ruling over all; for the Holy Name is adorned and sanctified by them, and all rungs are blessed as one, shining from the highest lamp of all. Therefore we have to raise them above. But here we must bend the fingers before the lamp, to indicate rungs below, shining from the lamp below; from here they reign, shining from Her, and they are 'lights of fire.'[230]

"Every day we recite the blessing 'luminaries of light,' which are supernal lights existing in that primordial light, all shining as one. But these are called 'lights of fire,' as we bless: 'who creates the lights of fire.' We do not say 'who illumines lights of fire,' although they shine from that fire, the blessed lamp. This is because once Sabbath enters, all those rungs below and all those who shine and rule enter and are absorbed in this lamp, where they are concealed and preserved; nothing is visible except that point alone, and all of them are concealed within it throughout the Sabbath day. Once Sabbath departs, She generates them one by one, as if they were created at that moment, and they all issue, created as originally, and are set in their places to rule. Then this lamp is blessed, and they surrender before it to shine. Once they shine, they are each assigned a place.[231]

“Similarly, those upper rungs, called ‘luminaries of light,’ rule by day, shining from the Supernal Lamp. When evening dusks, that Supernal Lamp gathers and absorbs them within itself until day dawns. As soon as Israel recites the blessing over the light by day, it generates them in full radiance. This is why we bless ‘who forms the lights,’ and we do not say ‘creates,’ but rather ‘forms’; whereas here, ‘who creates the lights of fire,’ since they are rungs below.[232]

“All is mystery, hinted by the fingers, intimating upper rungs and lower rungs. Upper rungs are acknowledged by raising the fingers, and by raising the fingers upper rungs and lower rungs are blessed as one. By lowering the fingers, lower rungs alone are blessed to shine.[233]

“This mystery is the fingernails behind, on the back of the fingers, and the fingers themselves within. Fingernails, behind the fingers, are other countenances, which need to shine from that lamp, and they are countenances that are called [208b] ‘the back.’ Fingers within, without nails, are inner countenances. This is the mystery of *and you will seek My back*—in back of the fingers, the fingernails—*but My face will not be seen* (Exodus 33:23)—the fingers within, without nails, which are inner countenances.[234]

“When we bless over the lamp, we must display the backs of the fingers, the nails, to be illumined by the lamp. The inner surface of the fingers should not be stretched, to be illumined by that lamp, since they shine only from the Supernal Lamp above, above, who is concealed and hidden, totally unrevealed; they do not shine at all from the lamp that is revealed. Therefore one must display the backs of the fingers, the nails, whereas the inner surface of the fingers should not be displayed before this lamp. They are concealed, illumined in concealment; they are innermost, illumined by the innermost; they are supernal, illumined by the supernal. Happy are Israel in this world and in the world that is coming![235]

“One should smell spices as Sabbath leaves, because that spirit departs and a person’s soul is left naked, on account of the departure of spirit, as has been established.[236]

“It is written: *He smelled the fragrance of his garments and blessed him* (Genesis 27:27). This verse has been established and discussed, but come and see! Fragrance is sustenance of the soul, for it is something that penetrates the soul and not the body.[237]

“*He smelled the fragrance of his garments*. As they have established, those garments derived from Adam—given to him by the blessed Holy One to clothe him. For when Adam sinned, the precious garment in which he was originally clothed when He placed him in the Garden of Eden was removed from him, and He clothed him in another garment. The original garment he wore in the Garden of Eden was of the garments of those chariots called ‘the back,’ garments that are called ‘garments of nail.’[238]

“When he was in Eden, all those chariots and all those holy camps surrounded Adam and he was completely protected; no evil could approach him. Once he sinned, and those garments were removed from him, he feared evil things and evil spirits, and those holy camps withdrew from him, and all that was left on him were those fingernails, surrounded by a circle of alien filth.[239]

“Therefore a person must not let those nails of filth grow, for as they grow, so slag overwhelms him and he worries every day. One should cut them but not throw them away, so as not to treat that realm with disdain, for that person can be harmed. All corresponds to the pattern above, for the Other Side surrounds all those ‘backs,’ and it must not appear anywhere in the world.[240]

“Afterward He made for Adam other garments from leaves of trees of the earthly Garden. For originally the garments were from the back of the upper Garden, and

now from the earthly Garden, and he left the Garden. Those garments emitted fragrance and aromas of the Garden, calming and delighting the soul, as is written: *He smelled the fragrance of his garments and blessed him* (Genesis 27:27), for his soul and spirit were calmed by that fragrance.[241]

"The finest fragrant aroma is myrtle, for myrtle sustains the holy place from which souls issue. This provides sustenance for the soul, corresponding to the pattern above, to be sustained through the nakedness in which she is left.[242]

"When Sabbath departed, Adam was clothed in those garments of the earthly Garden of Eden, emitting fragrance and aromas to sustain his soul, now that the holy supernal, precious spirit had departed from him. Myrtle is surely sustenance of the soul in all aspects![243]

"That supernal spirit descends upon a person in joy, delighting his soul. Then his soul exists as in the world that is coming, which she is destined [209a] to enjoy. As a person delights this spirit in this world, so that spirit delights him in the world that is coming, as is written: *Then you will delight upon YHVH…* (Isaiah 58:14), and it is written: *He will satisfy your soul with radiancies…* (ibid., 11). As a person satiates that joy and delights it, so too it satiates him in the world that is coming. Then one attains and perfects the full preciousness of Sabbath, as we have said. The blessed Holy One calls to him, saying, *You are My servant, Israel, in whom I glory* (Isaiah 49:3)."[244]

Rabbi Abba and the two Companions rose and kissed his head. They wept, and said, "Happy is our share, that the blessed Holy One prepared this path for us!"[245]

Rabbi Abba said, "The blessed Holy One prepared this path for me so that I could join you. Happy is my share, that I attained this path!"

He said to them, “I will tell you what I saw. Today I set out on the way and I saw a single light, and it split into three lights, which went in front of me and were then concealed. I said, ‘Surely I have seen *Shekhinah*. Happy is my share!’ And now, those three lights that I saw—they are you! Surely you are supernal lights and lamps to illumine this world and the world that is coming.”[246]

Rabbi Abba said, “Until now I did not know that all these hidden pearls were in your possession. Now that I see that these words have been uttered by the will and command of your Lord, I know that all those words ascend this day to the supernal Throne and are grasped by the Prince of the Countenance, who fashions them into crowns for his Lord. This day sixty holy chariots are crowned with these words uttered here today, for the glory of the Throne.”[247]

Just then he raised his eyes, and the sun was setting. Rabbi Abba said, “Let us go to this village close by in the desert.” They went and spent the night there.

At midnight Rabbi Abba and the other Companions rose to engage in Torah. Rabbi Abba said, “From here on, let us speak words with which to crown the righteous in the Garden of Eden, for now is the time when the blessed Holy One and all the righteous in the Garden listen to the voices of the righteous on earth.”[248]

Rabbi Abba opened, “*Every wise-hearted one among those doing the work made the Dwelling—ten curtains of* [*twisted linen, and violet, purple, and crimson; with cherubim of designer’s work they made them*] (Exodus 36:8). And it is written: *The heavens are heavens for YHVH, and the earth He has given to human beings* (Psalms 115:16). This verse should read as follows: *The heavens are for YHVH, and the earth*…. Why *The heavens are heavens for YHVH*? However, here one should contemplate, for there are *heavens*, and then there are *heavens*! Heavens below and earth beneath them; heavens above and earth beneath

them. All rungs, higher and lower, correspond to this pattern, these resembling those.[249]

"Heavens below are *ten curtains*, as is said: *Spreading the heavens like a curtain* (Psalms 104:2). The blessed Holy One made them to conduct the lower world, along with the camps within them. The ninth conducts the lower ones, which rotate closely concatenated. The tenth is the essential one.[250]

"In each of them are assigned camps, until the seventh. From the seventh on, there is a splendor emanating below from within the supernal Throne, illumining the tenth. From the radiance that it absorbs, the tenth gives to the ninth, which gives to the eighth and below.[251]

"When the hosts of stars are enumerated and this eighth one brings them forth, that radiance persists, providing power to each and every one, to be assigned its appropriate place, as is written: *The one who brings forth their array by number and calls them each by name: because of His great might and vast power, not one is missing* (Isaiah 40:26). *Because of His great might*—the splendor above, called *great might*.[252]

"Every single heaven is assigned and appointed over the world and over the earth, to conduct everything—except for the land of Israel, which is conducted by no heaven and by no power other than the blessed Holy One alone, as has been established.[253]

"Now, you might ask, 'How can a heaven spread over the land of Israel for nothing? Surely rain and dew descend upon it from heaven, like every other land!' Well, every single heaven has princes ruling over the world, [209b] and the prince ruling over each heaven gives of his power to that heaven, to be conveyed below, and that heaven obtains from the prince and transmits it below to earth—and that prince obtains only from the residue above.[254]

"Each heaven has certain openings, and the authority of each prince is designated from one opening to the next.

Beyond that opening he does not rule by even a hairsbreadth, and he may not encroach on the domain of his fellow's opening except when he is authorized to rule over him. Then kings on earth prevail, one over another.[255]

"In the middle of all those heavens lies one opening called Gavlon, and beneath this opening are seventy other openings, with seventy princes keeping guard at a distance of two thousand cubits, approaching no closer. That opening extends higher and higher until reaching the supernal Throne, and from that opening extend all directions of heaven until the gateway called Magdon, which marks the border of the land of Israel.[256]

"All those openings inscribed in the opening called Gavlon are engraved on the holy Throne and even called Gates of Righteousness, for no one else rules over them. The blessed Holy One attends to the land of Israel through that heaven, from one opening to the other, providing whatever it needs. And from the residue of that provision, those seventy princes take, giving to all other princes.[257]

"In the Garden of Eden below are supernal mysteries. When the blessed Holy One made the heavens, He brought fire and water from within the Throne of Glory, fused them as one, and fashioned the heavens below, which expanded until reaching the site of the Garden of Eden, where they settled. What did the blessed Holy One do? From the supernal holy Heaven He took other fire and water—which exist and do not exist, are revealed and unrevealed—and from that fire and water, taken from supernal Heaven, He made an expanse of heaven, joined to another heaven, and spread it over this Garden below.[258]

"There are four colors in that expanse of heaven above the Garden: white and red, green and black. By these colors are four openings beneath that expanse of heaven, open to the four directions of the heaven above the Garden —the heaven fashioned from that fire and water.[259]

“Within these openings appear four lights. In the opening on the right, from the expansion on the side of water, shine two lights through those openings: through the opening of the right and through the opening within the Countenance.[260]

“Within the light shining to the right is engraved one letter—glowing, projecting, sparkling within that light. This is the letter מ (*mem*), standing in the middle of that light of the opening. This letter ascends and descends, not remaining in one place. That light takes that letter and radiates it, so it does not remain in one place.[261]

“A light shining on the side facing the Countenance: one letter is engraved—glowing, projecting, sparkling in that light. This is the letter ר (*resh*), sometimes appearing as ב (*bet*), standing in the midst of that light of the opening, ascending and descending, sometimes revealed and sometimes not, not remaining in one place.[262]

“These two letters endure, and when the soul of a righteous person enters the Garden of Eden, these two letters emerge from that light and stand over that soul, ascending and descending. Then from those two openings, two chariots quickly descend from above—one supernal chariot that is the chariot of the great chief Michael; the second chariot, the chariot of the prince named Bo’el, who is the noble minister [210a] named Raphael. These descend and stand over the soul, declaring to her, ‘*Shalom! May he enter in peace! May he enter in peace!* (Isaiah 57:2).’ Then those two letters ascend and stand in their places, hidden within the light of those openings.[263]

“Two other openings—two other lights flash from the fiery radiance of those openings, one to the left and one to the back. Two other letters flash in those lights, sparkling within, one the letter ג (*gimel*) and one the letter נ (*nun*). And when the previous letters return to their places, these two others sparkle, ascending and descending, emerge from those lights, and stand over the soul.

“Then two chariots descend from those two openings. One chariot is the chariot of the great noble prince Gabriel. The second chariot is another holy one, of the great prince Nuriel. They descend from those openings and stand over the soul, while the letters return to their places.[264]

“Then these two chariots enter a certain hidden chamber called Aloes, where twelve kinds of spices are stored away, as is written: *Nard and saffron, cane and cinnamon*, [*with all trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes, with all the finest spices* (Song of Songs 4:14). They are twelve kinds of spices below.[265]

“There are found all those garments of souls intended to be worn by each one fittingly. In that garment are inscribed all the good deeds performed by that person in this world, and inscribed also is ‘This is the garment of so-and-so.’ They take that garment and clothe the soul of the righteous in the Garden, corresponding to the image of this world.[266]

“This pertains to thirty days and afterward; for during all thirty days no soul is unpunished before entering the Garden of Eden. Once she receives punishment, she enters the Garden as has been established, after being purified. Once she is clothed in this garment, she is assigned an appropriate place. Then all those letters descend, and those chariots ascend.[267]

“That heaven revolves twice a day by the motion of the other heaven attached to it, and this heaven does not depart from the Garden. This heaven is embroidered with all varieties of color. Twenty-two letters are inscribed and engraved in that heaven, each letter dripping dew of manna from above upon the Garden. By that dew of letters, those souls are bathed, to be nourished. Dew descends only from within the letters inscribed in that heaven, for those letters are totality of Torah, and that heaven is mystery of Torah, since it is made of fire and water of Torah. Therefore they stream dew upon all those who engage in Torah for its own

sake. Those words are inscribed in the Garden of Eden and ascend to that heaven, where from those letters they absorb that dew to nourish the soul, as is written: *Let my teaching drop like rain, my saying flow like dew* (Deuteronomy 32:2).[268]

"In the middle of this heaven is an opening—an opening facing the opening of the palace above. Through that opening souls fly from the Garden below upward through a column thrust in the Garden, reaching that opening within that heaven.[269]

"Into that opening in the middle of the heaven of the Garden enter three colors of light combined as one, illumining the colors of that column. Then this heaven sparkles and flashes in various glowing colors every moment, and the righteous delight in that supernal radiance. But on every Sabbath and every new moon, *Shekhinah* is revealed in this heaven more fully than on other times, and all the righteous come and bow before Her.

"Happy is the share of one who attains this garment of which we have spoken, in which the righteous are clothed in the Garden of Eden! They are fashioned out of good deeds performed by [210b] a person in this world through the commandments of Torah, by which the soul abides in the Garden of Eden and is clothed in these glorious garments.[270]

"When the soul ascends through that opening of the heaven, other glorious, supernal garments are presented to her, made out of aspiration and heartfelt intention in Torah and prayer. As this ascends, the one who is crowned is crowned, and a portion remains for that person, out of which garments of light are fashioned for the soul to wear as it ascends. Although it has been established that those garments depend on deeds, these depend solely on spirit of aspiration, as has been said, to abide among angels, holy spirits. This is lucidity of the matter, and so did the Holy

Lamp learn it from Elijah. Garments below in the earthly Garden, by deeds; garments above, by spirit of the heart.[271]

"*A river issues from Eden to water the garden*… (Genesis 2:10). This has been established, but in this lower Garden *a river issues from Eden* surely, and one must know the location of the essence and root of this river issuing into the Garden below. Where is it? In Eden. Eden is a supernal mystery and cannot be apprehended by the mind's eye. Mystery of the matter: If this place were allowed to be revealed below, the site of supernal holy Eden would also be knowable. For the sake of the hidden glory of the supernal holy Eden, lower Eden—from which that river gushes and flows—is hidden and concealed; so it is not allowed to be revealed even to those souls in the Garden of Eden.[272]

"As that river divides and issues from Eden to water the Garden, so too from within that opening in the middle of the Garden issues one light that divides in four directions through the four openings that we have mentioned, where those four inscribed letters exist. That light dividing into four lights, to four sparkling letters, issues from Eden, a radiant place of the Lower Point above. That point shines and becomes Eden, illumining; and no one has the power to see or know this point, only the radiance spreading from it, before which the righteous in the Garden bow, as has been said.[273]

"This Lower Point is the Garden in relation to Higher Eden, a place that cannot be known or contemplated. Concerning all this is written *No eye has seen, O God, but You*, [*what You will do for one who awaits You*] (Isaiah 64:3). This name can be interpreted: אלהים זולתך (*Elohim zulatekha*), *O God, but You*—holy Lower Point, who knows this Eden below, concealed in the Garden, known by no one else. *O God, but You*—Highest Eden of all, mystery of the World that is Coming, who knows this Lower Point by means of a certain Righteous One issuing from Him, saturating it. No

one knows it except for Him, as is written: *O God, but You*, for He is linked above, above to *Ein Sof*.[274]

"The river issuing from Eden below. This mystery here is for the wise, in the mystery of what is written: [*He will satisfy your soul*] בצחצחות (*be-tsaḥtsaḥot*), *in parched places, with radiancies* (Isaiah 58:11). This word can be interpreted above and below. A soul departing this world of darkness yearns to see, like a person craving thirstily to drink water; thus every single one is צח צחות (*tsaḥ tsaḥot*), as is said: צחה (*tsiḥeh*), *parched with, thirst* (Isaiah 5:13)—thirsting for those *tsaḥot*, radiancies, of lights of the Garden, heaven, and palaces of the Garden.[275]

"Were it not for that garment, they could not endure. As for that river issuing from Eden, all those souls in garments of glory sit by that river and thus become tranquil in those radiancies and can endure. That place is a remedy for souls, to become calm and be nourished by those radiancies; the souls delight by that river, settling.[276]

"That river above pours forth souls, which fly from it into the Garden. This river below in the Garden on earth refines souls, enabling them to become tranquil in those [211a] radiancies. Similarly, in this world outside, by the scent of water the soul becomes calm enough to delight, for she issued like this originally. Since souls delight by that river issuing from Eden, they can be tranquil in those supernal radiancies, to ascend through that opening in the middle of the heaven.[277]

"One column standing in the middle of the Garden. By that column they ascend through the opening of the heaven, and surrounding it are *cloud, smoke, and glow* (Isaiah 4:5). Although they have established this verse, this *cloud* and *smoke* are outside, and the *glow* within, to cover those ascending so that they are not seen by those remaining below.[278]

"For here is mystery of mysteries. When the blessed Holy One wishes to be arrayed and adorned on Sabbaths,

holidays, and festivals, He sends four faces of the eagle, and they stand poised on the palace called *Deror* (Freedom), corresponding to מר דרור (*mor deror*), *congealed myrrh* (Exodus 30:23). So in the Jubilee year we must proclaim *deror* (freedom), as has been said. Those four faces utter a sound, which can be heard only by those souls worthy of ascending, who gather there and are grasped by the four faces and conducted into the column standing in the middle. At that moment, the column emits cloud, fire, and smoke, glowing within.[279]

"These are called *site of Mount Zion* and *her assemblies* (Isaiah 4:5). *Site of Mount Zion*—arrayal above when the Lower Point is adorned. And they are *assemblies* of that Point, to be adorned.[280]

"Once these souls ascend to that opening of the heaven, that heaven revolves around the Garden three times. From the sweet sound of the heaven's revolving, all those souls emerge and see the loveliness of the heaven and see that column emitting fire, cloud, and smoke, and the flashing glow, and they all bow. Then souls ascend through that opening until they reach the circle surrounding that Point. They see what they see, and from the radiance and joy of what they see, they ascend and descend, approach and retreat.[281]

"She desires them, adorned in radiance. Jealousy clothes the light of a certain supernal Righteous One, and He gazes at the beauty of this Point and Her array; He grasps Her and lifts Her, and light shines into light, becoming one.[282]

"All the powers of heaven open at that moment: 'Happy are you, O righteous of Israel, who engage in Torah, for the joy of your Lord is within you, the crown of your Lord is adorned by you!'

"Then, since light shines into light, two lights join as one, illumining. Afterward, they descend, gazing to delight in the souls of the righteous, revealed and unrevealed. Of

this is said *No eye has seen, O God, but You, what You will do for one who awaits You* (Isaiah 64:3).[283]

"*An image above the heads of the living being: an expanse like awesome ice, spread out above their heads* (Ezekiel 1:22). This verse has been established; but there is an expanse, and then there is an expanse! The expanse below stands upon the four living beings, and from there extends a form of a certain female behind a male. This is mystery of what is written: *You will see My back* (Exodus 33:23); *Behind and in front You formed me* (Psalms 139:5); and it is written: *one of his sides* (Genesis 2:21).[284]

"The expanse above stands upon supernal living beings, and from there extends and begins a form of a certain male who is supernal mystery. Of these two expanses, one is called *end of the heavens*, and the other, *from the end of the heavens*, as is written: *from the end of the heavens to the end of the heavens* (Deuteronomy 4:32).[285]

"*The heads of the living being* below are four living beings who are supernal insignia above those four inscribed letters within the four openings of the Garden of Eden. Although we have said that Eden is below on earth—certainly so! However, all is supernal mystery, as has been said. [211b] For just as this Point that we have mentioned has a portion above, so it has a portion below on earth, and this Garden below is its portion—to delight in spirits of the righteous on earth, enjoying all aspects, above and below. Above, with the Righteous One; below, with fruit of the Righteous One—delight exists above and below only by the Righteous One. And this Garden derives from the Point called Eden.[286]

"Those *heads of the living being are* four heads of faces. One is a lion, the lion of which is written *on the right, a lion's face*. One is an ox, as is written: *on the left, an ox's face*. One is an eagle, as is written: *an eagle's face*. The human includes them all, as is written: *The image of their face was a human face* (Ezekiel 1:10).[287]

“These are four riverheads conveying the holy Throne, from whose burden they perspire. From the perspiration of this burden is formed the River of Fire, as is written: *A river of fire was flowing and gushing from His presence, a thousand thousands serving Him* (Daniel 7:10).[288]

“When souls ascend, they bathe in that River of Fire and are offered up—not burned but bathed. Come and see from a salamander, from whom a garment is fashioned: since it derives from fire, that garment can be washed only in fire; fire consumes its filth, and that garment is cleansed. Similarly, a soul of fire, taken from the holy Throne, of which is written *His throne flames of fire* (Daniel 7:9). When she must be washed of her filth, she passes through fire and is cleansed—fire consuming all that filth of the soul, and the soul washed and purified.[289]

“Now, you might say, ‘If so, by this the soul is not punished!’ Come and see: Woe to the soul who must endure strange fire, even though she is cleansed! However, when she is very filthy, woe to the soul who suffers that punishment; for such filth is cleansed in fire twice.[290]

“The first time—once she has received punishment in the body—the soul is taken and conducted into a certain place called Ben-hinnom. Why is it called Ben-hinnom? Well, there is a place in Hell where souls are purged and purified before they enter the Garden of Eden. If those souls are worthy, then when they are brought into that place two angelic messengers appear in the Garden of Eden, standing at the gate, and they call out to the officials in that place in Hell to receive that soul. If that soul has not yet been cleansed in fire, those officials call out, saying ‘הנם (*Hinnam*), Here they are!’ Sometimes, if she has already been cleansed, those officials emerge with her from that place and present her at the opening of the Garden, where those messengers are standing, and they say to them, ‘*Hinnam*, Here they are! Here are those souls, for they have already

been cleansed.’ Then that soul is ushered into the Garden of Eden.[291]

“How broken she is from the calamitous cleansing of Hell, the trauma of lower fire! Although it descends from above, once reaching earth below, it is not rarefied fire, and the soul is punished by it and broken. Then the blessed Holy One brings forth the sun, shining through four openings illumining the heaven above the Garden, and it reaches that soul, who is healed, as is written: *For you, in awe of My name, the sun of righteousness will rise, with healing in its wings* (Malachi 3:20).[292]

“The second time—after she has dwelled in the Garden of Eden below. Until now, as long as she is there, she has not separated herself entirely from matters of worldly appearance. When she is raised above, she must separate from all lowly appearance and matters; so she is passed through that River of Fire. Then the soul is cleansed completely; she emerges and appears before the Master of the Universe, purified in every aspect. Gazing upon that light, she is totally healed and perfected. Then those souls stand in garments, adorned before their Lord. Happy is the share [212a] of the righteous in this world and in the world that is coming![293]

“Those souls in the Garden of Eden below roam on every new moon and Sabbath, ascending to the place called Walls of Jerusalem, where there are numerous princes and chariots guarding those walls, as is written: *Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted watchmen* (Isaiah 62:6). They ascend to that place, but do not enter until they are cleansed. There they bow, delighting in that radiance, and return to the Garden.[294]

“Emerging from there, they roam through the world and see bodies of the wicked being punished, as is written: *They will go out and stare at the corpses of the people who rebel against Me, for their worm will not die, nor their fire be quenched, and they will be a horror to all flesh* (Isaiah

66:24). What is *to all flesh*? To the other bodies around them, as has been established. Then they roam and gaze upon those in pain and sickness and those who suffer for the unification of their Lord, and they return and tell the Messiah.[295]

"When they tell the Messiah about the suffering of Israel in exile and about the wicked among them who do not seek to know their Lord, he weeps aloud over the wicked, as is written: *But he was wounded for our sins, crushed for our iniquities* (Isaiah 53:5). Those souls return and stand in their places.

"In the Garden of Eden there is one chamber called the Chamber of the Ill. The Messiah then enters that chamber and calls for all the illnesses, all the pains, and all the sufferings of Israel to come upon him, and they all do so. And if he did not ease them off of Israel, taking them upon himself, no one could endure the sufferings of Israel from the punishments of Torah, as is written: *Yet it was our sickness that he was bearing*, [*our pains that he endured*] (Isaiah 53:4). Similarly, Rabbi El'azar on earth.[296]

"For innumerable are the sufferings looming over a person every day, all of which descended into the world at the time when Torah was given. When the people of Israel were in the Holy Land, they eliminated all those illnesses and sufferings from the world through rituals and sacrifices. Now, the Messiah removes them from inhabitants of the world, until a person departs from this world and receives punishment, as has been said. Except for the extremely wicked, who are sent deep within Hell, into those other compartments, where they are punished severely for the extreme filth of the soul; then intense fire is kindled to consume that filth. Woe to the soul who suffers that punishment! Furthermore, angels of destruction harass them with rods of fire to shake out that filth. Woe to the soul who suffers that punishment! Happy are those who keep the commandments of Torah![297]

“The Holy Point wishes to delight above in spirits of the righteous, as has been said. When She wishes to delight below in spirits of the righteous—like a mother rejoicing over her children and delighting in them—at midnight She descends and delights in them.[298]

“The heaven that we have mentioned, over the Garden, presides over four heads, which are the four letters that we have mentioned, mystery of four living beings. This heaven stands below, as has been said.[299]

“The heaven of that Point stands above, over those four living beings that we have mentioned. That heaven, corresponding to the other one, is embroidered with holy colors. Into this heaven gaze four living beings and all those forces below. When this heaven shines in its colors and sparkles, all those chariots and all those forces and camps know that their food is prepared.[300]

“This heaven is embroidered with all holy colors. Within it are four openings, inscribed with four sparkling letters.

“One opening is marked to the east, and in that opening stands one letter. That letter is א (*alef*), sparkling, ascending and descending in that opening. This opening glows and shines from supernal scintillation, and this letter sparkles and protrudes from within it, descending and ascending, inscribed in that opening.[301]

“The second opening is marked to the north, and in it stands one letter—the letter ד (*dalet*) [212b], standing and sparkling, ascending and descending, flashing in that opening. Sometimes it sparkles in scintillation, and sometimes that light is concealed, not shining. Thus, this letter does not endure steadfastly; this letter is inscribed in this opening.[302]

“The third opening, to the west, in which stands one letter, inscribed and shining in that opening. This is the letter נ (*nun*), sparkling in scintillation in that opening.[303]

“The fourth opening, an opening to the south, in which stands an inscription of one small lower point, visible and

invisible, namely the letter י (*yod*). These are four letters in four directions of that heaven within those openings.[304]

"In this heaven other letters are inscribed, with crowns on their heads—twenty-two letters, adorned with crowns. This heaven moves and revolves over the living beings by inscription of letters—mystery of enumeration of unity, in mystery of one permutation: א״ט ב״ח ג״ז ד״ו (*alef*, *tet*; *bet*, *ḥet*; *gimel*, *zayin*; *dalet*, *vav*). These letters rotate that heaven by mystery of other supernal letters, holy and concealed. These other, concealed letters rotate that heaven and are then seen in the revolution of א״ט ב״ח (*alef*, *tet*; *bet*, *ḥet*) and inscribed in this heaven.[305]

"When this heaven shines, four mysteries of Holy Names are illumined in it, permuted in permutations of thirty-two paths. Then dew descends from this heaven by those letters of mysteries of the Holy Name, and all those chariots and all those forces and holy camps are nourished, all partaking in joy.[306]

"When Judgment impends, these letters are concealed and hidden, four within four—namely ט ח ז ו (*tet, ḥet, zayin, vav*). When these are hidden and concealed, a voice of the north is aroused, and all know that Judgment prevails over the world, and in this heaven is drawn one color including all colors.[307]

"When this heaven moves from the east, those four heads that we have mentioned, with four letters, all move in their journey and rise in ascension. As they move and rise, the one who ascends ascends—and letters reappear completely in original mystery: א״ט ב״ח ג״ז ד״ו (*alef*, *tet*; *bet*, *ḥet*; *gimel*, *zayin*; *dalet*, *vav*). That heaven is embroidered, and then shines radiantly.[308]

"When this heaven is restored with these letters, all resume roaring for food and nourishment. As they roar and raise a cry, that sound is heard above, above, and then the one who absorbs absorbs blessings and holiness.[309]

“Letters revolve and rotate, and that heaven revolves, and those letters stand in the south. Once standing there, they ascend and sparkle in scintillation, flashing. Then in the middle of that heaven, an insignia is inscribed, and that insignia is one letter: י (*yod*). Once this letter is inscribed and seen, three other letters flash after it: ה ו ה (*he, vav, he*).[310]

“These letters sparkle in the middle of this heaven, ascending and descending, flashing in twelve flashes. After these flash twelve times, the one who descends descends—and is absorbed in those letters and crowned by them, remaining unknown. Then all those forces and all those camps rejoice and offer songs and praise.[311]

“This heaven moves a second time, rotating and revolving, and those original letters that we mentioned—ב״ח א״ט (*alef, tet; bet, ḥet*)—are included in the supernal letters that we mentioned, mystery of the Holy Name. That heaven revolves, and those letters that were in the middle, mystery of the Holy Name, are all inscribed in the south—inscribed yet not inscribed. No one can gaze in that direction; all cover themselves and utter sweetly, *Blessed be the glory of YHVH from His place!* (Ezekiel 3:12). Covering themselves from the side [213a] of the Countenance, they say this; covering themselves from all sides, they say this.[312]

“This heaven revolves as before, rotating from side to side. Then a sweet sound of many camps on this side, and a sweet sound of many camps on that side, and so on all sides. At that moment, the heaven is illumined by another radiance, greater than before, attaining the brilliance of another color, comprising all colors.

“These letters that we have mentioned ascend in that heaven and receive one supernal letter that joins with the Name of these letters. For although these are letters of the Holy Name, this is a name included below, since this mystery is included above and below, and when included below, these letters ascend to receive one letter, from which these letters below are sustained, and that letter is ו (*vav*).

This descends, and these letters join with that letter, and then they are all in one crowning, becoming a complete name below, a name complete and incomplete—a complete name in five letters, yet not a complete name of nine letters. A complete name in five letters is ויהוה (*Va-YHVH*), And *YHVH*, mystery intimating male and female; a complete name in nine letters: יהוה אלהים (*YHVH Elohim*)—a name entirely complete. The other name intimates, consisting of five, as we have said; but this is entirely complete.[313]

"Once these letters unite, that heaven shines in thirty-two lights; then all is in joy, all abiding in one mystery, above and below. All those chariots and all those camps abide in mystery of consummation, and all rungs are arranged in their places, each one fittingly.[314]

"In this heaven, to the north, stands one glowing flame that never subsides. It is inscribed with other letters to the right—ten names, amounting to seventy names, all inscribed in this heaven, all shining as one.[315]

"By this heaven are conveyed all heavens below on the side of Holiness, until reaching those other heavens of the Other Side, called *curtains of goat hair*, as is said: *They made curtains of goat hair for a tent over the Dwelling* (Exodus 36:14). For there are *curtains*, and then there are *curtains*! *Curtains of the Dwelling* (Numbers 4:25) are curtains called 'heavens of the living beings of the Holy Dwelling.' *Curtains of goat hair* are other heavens, of the Other Side. These are heavens in mystery of chariots of holy spirits, while those are heavens outside, pertaining to the body, to mundane matters—aspects of craving and bodily actions. They cover those inner heavens like a shell over a kernel; those heavens within are a thin membrane over the kernel, called *heavens for YHVH* (Psalms 115:16), for this Name below.[316]

"There are other heavens above—innermost heavens, called 'heavens of the living beings,' which are mystery of the Holy Name, in mystery of noble supernal living beings.

These are supernal mysteries in mysteries of Torah—totality of twenty-two engraved, inscribed letters, issuing from the supreme eighth heaven, which is the heaven above the living beings. This is the one that has no appearance; this is concealed and hidden, having no color. All colors issue from it; within it is no color; it is not seen or revealed. This is the one that generates all lights; within it is seen no radiance nor darkness nor color—except for souls of the righteous, who see from the lower heaven, as from behind a wall, a radiance emitted and shone by this upper heaven. That ceaseless radiance—no one can know it, no one can fathom it.[317]

"Below this, all those heavens are included in one name called *heavens*, while these of the Holy Name are called *the heavens*—those by which the supernal Name is called, those by which the Holy Name is crowned. Therefore it is written: *The heavens are heavens for* YHVH (Psalms 115:16)—for that hiddenness of the supreme heaven presiding [213b] over them.[318]

"Until here, a hint of the Holy Name, for the blessed Holy One is called by names. From here on, no one wise in understanding can know or grasp at all—except for one slight gleam, not enduring to be dwelt upon.[319]

"Happy is the share of one who enters and emerges, and knows how to contemplate the mysteries of his Lord, to cleave to Him! By these mysteries, one can cleave to his Lord, in aspiration and intention of the heart, knowing the dominion of wisdom in supernal mystery.[320]

"When one worships his Lord in prayer, he should unite his will above like a flame to a burning coal, unifying those lower heavens on the side of Holiness, crowning them with one name below; and from there on, unifying those upper, inner heavens, so that they all become one with that supernal heaven presiding over them.[321]

"While his mouth and lips are moving, he should focus his heart and his will should ascend higher and higher,

uniting all in mystery of mysteries, where all wills and thoughts are embedded, in the mystery abiding in *Ein Sof*. This applies to every single prayer—focusing body and soul on this, every single day, to adorn all one's days with mysteries of supernal days through worship.[322]

"At night, one should set his intention that he is departing from the world and that his soul is leaving him, and he should restore her to the Lord of all. For every single night, a mystery of mysteries becomes knowable to the wise of heart.[323]

"This lower heaven abides in mystery of that Point, as we have said. That heaven comprises above and below, while its base is below—like a lamp emitting a black light to unite with a white light, while its base is below in an oil wick. Similarly below, with that Point: by day She is comprised from above, and by night She is comprised from below, of the souls of the righteous.[324]

"All things of the world return to the source, foundation, and root from which they issued. And numerous nighttime entities are poised to take what each is entitled to, as is said: *Even the nights admonish me, my innards* (Psalms 16:7). The soul goes flying and returns to the source befitting her. The body remains still as a stone, and returns to the place fit to settle upon it. Thus the body returns to its aspect, and the soul to hers. Mystery of the Other Side settles upon the body, and therefore one's hands become defiled and one must wash them, as we have established, for at night all returns to its place. The souls of the righteous ascend and return to their place, and by them is crowned the one who is crowned, and She comprises all sides. Then the glory of the blessed Holy One ascends, and is crowned by all.[325]

"At night rule princes, appointed over the souls of the righteous, to raise them above and offer them as a pleasing offering to their Lord. The prince appointed over all those camps is named Surya, the chief prince. Once the soul

ascends through all those heavens, she is brought to him; then he inhales her scent, as is said: *His scenting will be by the awe of YHVH* (Isaiah 11:3)—as King Messiah is destined to do in the world. By his hand they are all entrusted and brought closer. And when all those souls are brought to the place where they are brought and appear there, this is the mystery: All those souls are contained in that Point, and She absorbs them all at once, like someone swallowing something, and She conceives like a woman who is impregnated.[326]

"This mystery is for masters of qualities: When this Point conceives, like a woman impregnated, She enjoys the pleasure imbued in the soul from this world by those good deeds and by the Torah that it studied that day. She absorbs that aspiration of this world, enjoying it in delight, and is comprised from all sides.[327]

"Afterward She brings them forth and gives birth to them as originally, and the soul is now new as originally. This is the mystery of *New every morning* (Lamentations 3:23)—really *new*, as has been said. Why [214a] are they new? Because of the mystery that is written: *Great is Your faithfulness* (ibid.)—really *great*, for She can contain them and absorb them—then She generates them and they are *new*. So, She grasps others from above by day. Happy are the righteous in this world and in the world that is coming!"[328]

Meanwhile day began to shine. Rabbi Abba said, "Let us rise and go and praise the Master of the Universe!"

They rose and went and prayed. Afterward the Companions returned to Rabbi Abba and said to him, "Let him who began conclude the praise! Happy is our share on this way, that we have been privileged to crown the blessed Holy One with mysteries of Torah!"[329]

Rabbi Abba opened, "*Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood* (Exodus 37:1). Although those mysteries of the Dwelling

have been established by the Companions among the mysteries of the Holy Lamp, here one should contemplate, for this mystery is adorned with many mysteries to learn wisdom.[330]

"This ark is a mystery, to insert Written Torah, hidden within it by six—those six surrounding boards. This is called *ark*. When those six surround, becoming as one, it is one body, into which is inserted mystery of Torah, of six aspects.[331]

"Those boards are five, and five books enter it; those five are six, with one rung entering secretly, called 'mystery of all,' and this is mystery of Covenant. When this enters those five boards, the ark and Torah abide in mystery of nine rungs, which are two Names. Afterward, one board prevails, supernal mystery covering all—mystery of that expanse surrounding and covering all—and they all abide in concealment.[332]

"Here one should contemplate and know mysteries of the ark. There is an ark, and then there is an ark, one opposite the other."[333]

He opened, saying, "*All of it has Araunah the king given to the king*… (2 Samuel 24:23). Now, was Araunah a king? Although the Companions have established this, still, David —who said *Whoever strikes down the Jebusite and reaches the conduit*… (ibid. 5:8), and who seized and held Jerusalem and thus possessed this site—why did he purchase it with money?[334]

"Now, you might say, 'Although Jerusalem belonged to David, that place was the heritage of Araunah, as in the case of Naboth the Jezreelite: although Ahab ruled as king, he had to request that vineyard from Naboth. Similarly, with David.'[335]

"However, Araunah was surely a king, and that place belonged to him and he ruled over it. When the time came for it to pass out of his possession, it did so only by much bloodshed and killing among Israel. Thus after killing and

death, that Angel of Destruction stood upon that spot, and there, having killed, and standing in that place, he could not prevail and his strength failed.[336]

"That place was the place where Isaac was bound, for there Abraham built an altar and bound Isaac his son. When the blessed Holy One saw that place, He was filled with compassion, as is written: *YHVH saw* (1 Chronicles 21:15). What did He see? He saw the binding of Isaac in that place and He felt compassion for them. Immediately, *YHVH said to the destroying angel, 'Enough!* [*Now, stay your hand!'*] (ibid.) What is רב (*rav*), *Enough*? They have already established this: 'Take הרב (*ha-rav*), the great one.' However, the meaning is as follows: Here is written *Rav, Enough!*, and there is written *Rav, Long enough, have you stayed at this mountain* (Deuteronomy 1:6). Similarly, *Rav*, 'Long enough, has this place been in your possession. For many years it was in your possession; now, *rav*, long enough! Return the place to its owner.' Even so, it left his possession only by blood, plague, and money.[337]

"Why is he called ארונה (*Aravnah*), *Araunah* (2 Samuel 24), and it is also written ארנן (*Arnan*), *Ornan* (1 Chronicles 21:15)? As long as that place was in his possession, he was called ארונה (*Aravnah*)—ארון (*aron*), Ark, of the Other Side. As for the extra letter added to him, so it must be, adding to the one called 'evil-eyed,' mystery of the Other Side; and that addition is actually a diminution. Conversely, on the side of Holiness, letters are diminished and holiness is added—mystery of what is written: *standing upon* שני עשר (*shenei asar*), *twelve, oxen* (1 Kings 7:25), missing ם (*mem*), [214b] since it is not written שנים (*sheneim*) but rather שני (*shenei*). Whereas the Other Side is given extra letters, as is written: *He made curtains of goat hair for a tent over the Dwelling*, עשתי עשרה (*ashtei esreh*), *eleven, curtains* (Exodus 36:14)—an extra letter, which is a diminution. On the side of Holiness, שני עשר (*shenei asar*) and no more, whereas here עשתי עשרה (*ashtei esreh*) —all a diminution for him. So it must be for that רע עין (*ra*

ayin), evil-eyed one, to fill his עין (*ayin*), diminishing him. Similarly, ארונה (*Aravnah*), *Araunah*, with an extra letter, not spelled ארון (*Aron*).[338]

"This side of Holiness is called *Aron*, Ark of, the Covenant. That Ark of the Covenant is suitable for the body, for the human image to enter it. Based on this mystery, when holy pious ones departed from this world, they were placed in *aron*, a coffin. For the Other Side is not arrayed in a body, nor included in a human body; therefore bodies were not created for that Other Side, since they are not included in a human body.[339]

"Of Joseph, what is written? ויישם בארון (*Va-yisem ba-aron*), *He was placed in a coffin* (Genesis 50:26). Why spelled with a double י (*yod*)? Because covenant was joined with Covenant, mystery below with mystery above, and he entered the *aron*. Why? Because he preserved the holy covenant and was thereby fulfilled; so he became worthy of entering the *aron*, all fittingly."[340]

Rabbi Abba wept, and said, "Woe to inhabitants of the world, who do not know! Woe for that shame! Woe for that punishment! For everyone who wishes, enters an *aron*. Only a righteous one should enter an *aron*—one who knows for certain that he has not sinned by that covenant, sign of the holy covenant, from his youth, and has preserved it fittingly. Otherwise, he should not enter an *aron*, tainting the *aron*.[341]

"A mystery—this must join with the sign of the holy covenant, a mystery befitting it alone. For the *aron* joins only with a righteous one who preserves the sign of the holy covenant, and whoever taints the covenant—woe to him for tainting it in his life, woe to him for tainting it in his death! Woe to him for that punishment, woe to him for tainting the sign of the holy covenant! Woe to him for that shame, for eternal vengeance will be wreaked upon him—vengeance of this world and vengeance for that taint. This is the mystery of what is written: *For the rod of wickedness shall not rest on the portion of the righteous* (Psalms 125:3).[342]

“When he is judged in that world, they examine his deeds to see whether he tainted the mystery of the holy covenant sealed in his flesh—and now he taints the *aron* of his covenant and has no portion among the righteous. They examine him and sentence him to be excluded from the category of human. Once he is excluded from the category of human, they exclude him from the category of all others destined for eternal life, and he is placed in the *aron* that is not included in mystery of the human body. Once he is delivered to that side, woe to him, for he is put into Hell and never leaves. Of him is written *They will go out and stare at the corpses of the people who rebel against Me, for their worm will not die, nor their fire be quenched, and they will be a horror to all flesh* (Isaiah 66:24)—those who remain in the category of human.[343]

“This pertains if one has not turned back completely in repentance, a turning capable of covering his deeds. Even so, it is better for him not to enter an *aron*, for as long as the body exists the soul is judged and cannot enter her place—except for those noble pious ones, whose share is happy in this world and in the world that is coming. For no sin is as grave before the blessed Holy One as that of betraying and tainting this sign of the holy covenant. Of this sin is written *What he did was evil in the eyes of YHVH* (Genesis 38:10).[344]

“What is written here? *Bezalel made the ark* (Exodus 37:1). Now, why didn’t the wise men who made the Dwelling make the ark? Well, Bezalel, who is mystery of holy Covenant and preserved it, and who attained his allotted share—he engaged in his own act, with no one else.”[345]

All those Companions came and kissed him.[346]

When they reached Rabbi Shim’on and arranged before him these words—all that had been said on the way—he wept. Then he opened, saying, *“The path of the righteous is like gleaming light, shining ever brighter until full day* (Proverbs 4:18). [215a] This verse has been discussed, but

this verse should be contemplated. *The path of the righteous*—the path walked by the righteous is the path of truth, a path in which the blessed Holy One delights, a path in which He goes before them, with all those chariots coming to hear the words of their mouths.[347]

"*Like gleaming light*—shining ever brighter, not darkening at all, unlike the wicked, whose path darkens constantly, as is said: *The way of the wicked is like darkness*… (Proverbs 4:19).[348]

"Alternatively, *The path of the righteous*—what is the difference between *path* and *way*? This has already been established. However, a *path* is that which is just now opened and revealed; formed there is a *path* until now untrodden by any feet. דרך (*Derekh*), *a way*, as is said: כדורך (*ke-dorekh*), *like one who treads, in a winepress* (Isaiah 63:2)—which anyone who wishes can tread.

"Therefore for the righteous it is called a *path*, for they were the first to open that place. And it is not the place itself that matters, since even if other inhabitants of the world walk in that place, now that the righteous walk there, it is new; it is a place where no one else has ever walked. For the righteous renew that place by many sublime words in which the blessed Holy One delights.[349]

"Furthermore, *Shekhinah* goes in that place, which was not so before. Thus it is called ארח (*oraḥ*), *path*, since a supernal holy guest אתארח (*it'araḥ*), visits, there.[350]

"A *way* is open to all, and anyone who wishes can tread it, even the wicked. A *way*—this is the mystery of *Who makes a way through the sea* (Isaiah 43:16), for the unwanted Other Side treads it, dominating, defiling the Dwelling. Thus the righteous alone stand and rule in the one called *path*, as we have established; whereas a *way* is for all, for this side and that.[351]

"As for you, holy ones of the Highest, a *path* was prepared for you and you visited it, and sublime words were

arranged before the Ancient of Days. Happy is your share!”[352]

Rabbi Shim’on opened, saying, *“Joshua son of Nun was filled with a spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him* (Deuteronomy 34:9). In various places we have learned that Moses’ face was like the sun, and that of Joshua like the face of the moon. For the moon has light only by light of the sun, when it illumines the moon; and the moon is filled by the sun, and when filled, it becomes complete.[353]

“What is completeness of the moon? Mystery of all, called Image, in mystery of the supernal Name; for it assumes this Name only when it becomes complete. For it has inherited many names, by which it is called when it assumes particular states; according to the status it assumes, so it is called by that precise name. When it assumes the mystery of fullness, completed on all sides, it is called *YHVH*—its fullness like fullness above, for Daughter has inherited from Her Mother.[354]

“This occurs on the fifteenth day, as is written: *On the fifteenth day of this seventh month,* [*a festival of booths, seven days, to YHVH*] (Leviticus 23:34); and it is written: *On the tenth of this seventh month* [*is the Day of Atonement*] (ibid., 27)—all is one mystery. When the World that is Coming presides in mystery of all ten utterances over this month, it is called *on the tenth*; and when the moon is traced in single fullness among them, it is called *on the fifteenth*, for ה (*he*) is joined and engraved among them. This mystery is ה י (*yod he*).[355]

“When it assumes this Name, it joins with *he*, and is supplemented for those below, to nourish them and provide them with their food—and supplemented in mystery of the letter *he* as before: one, to be engraved and join in mystery above; and one to provide sustenance to those below. Then the moon assumes fullness on all sides, above and below, in

mystery of this Name, all becoming one mystery and one fullness.[356]

"Joshua—mystery of fullness of the moon, with these letters: בן נון (*bin nun*), *son of Nun* (Deuteronomy 34:9), *nun*, precisely, for *nun* is mystery of the moon.[357]

"*Was filled* (ibid.)—mystery of fullness of the Holy Name; then he is *filled with a spirit of wisdom* (ibid.), surely. For the supernal point, which is י (*yod*), expands and issues *a spirit*, and that *spirit* forms a palace. That *spirit* expands and forms six aspects; that *spirit* expands in mystery of all these and is filled and forms a palace below. All is filled, forming mystery [215b] of the Holy Name in single fullness.[358]

"Why is Joshua *filled with a spirit of wisdom*? Because *Moses laid his hands upon him* (Deuteronomy 34:9)—pouring forth blessings, and the well was filled by him. As for you, holy ones of the Highest, each one of you is filled with *a spirit of wisdom* and assumes the fullness of the spirit of wisdom, for the blessed Holy One delights in you and has laid His hands upon you. Happy is my share, that my eyes have seen this and have seen the fullness of the spirit of wisdom within you![359]

"It is written: *You shall not eat over the blood. You shall not divine nor interpret omens* (Leviticus 19:26). This verse has been established; the mystery of the matter is as follows: One who eats without prayer—not praying for his blood before eating—is equivalent to one who divines or interprets omens. For at night the soul ascends and prostrates herself, to gaze upon the mystery of supernal Glory, each one as she deserves; and the person is left only with the power associated with blood to sustain the body. Even so, he tastes death.[360]

"That power is prepared to be aroused by the power of the soul and receive it. When the person awakens he is impure, as we have established, for the Other Side

dominates a place vacant of soul. Once he is purified by water—even if the person engages in Torah—*nishmeta*, the soul, is not stabilized in its place and he is controlled only by the power of blood, called *nefesh*, which permeates the blood constantly, as we have established. When a person offers a prayer, worshiping his Lord, then the power of blood subsides in its place and the power of soul strengthens, settling upon that place. Then the person is complete before his Lord, fittingly: *nefesh* below, and mystery of the power of soul above.[361]

"Therefore, one who prays before eating stabilizes himself properly, and the soul prevails, mounting her dwelling place fittingly. But if a person eats before offering his prayer, which would enable the blood to subside in its place, then he is like one who divines and interprets omens; for it is the way of a diviner to elevate the Other Side and degrade the side of Holiness.

"Why is a person who engages in that side called מנחש (*menaḥesh*), a diviner? Because he devotes himself to the נחש (*naḥash*), serpent, increasing its power and strength. This is one who worships other gods. Similarly, this one worships that power of blood and does not worship the blessed Holy One, strengthening the power of soul, side of Holiness.[362]

"עונן (*Onen*), interpreted omens—engaging in sin, not in virtue. Now, you might say, 'Look, a נ (*nun*) stands in the middle!' Certainly so, for one cannot control the Other Side until an element of the side of Holiness is mingled with it, as one thin thread. Whoever wishes to maintain a lie should mix an element of truth in it, so that the lie will persist. Thus, עון (*avon*), sin, is a lie, and in order to maintain it, an element of truth is inserted, namely נ (*nun*); thereby, that lie is sustained. Whoever fails to offer prayer for his blood to the blessed Holy One before eating is like one who divines and interprets omens.[363]

"Human prayer is as you said, O holy ones of the Highest! Happy is your share! For thereby a person mends

his body and soul, becoming whole. Prayer is restorative enhancements, arrayed as one, and they are four.[364]

"First enhancement: enhancing oneself, becoming complete. Second enhancement: enhancing this world. Third enhancement: enhancing the world above with all the heavenly forces. Fourth enhancement: enhancing the Holy Name, in mystery of holy chariots and in mystery of all worlds above and below, enhancing mysteries of the Holy Name fittingly.

"First enhancement: enhancing oneself, for one should refine himself with *mitsvah* and holiness, with sacrifices and ascent offerings, to become pure.[365]

"Second enhancement: enhancing the existence of this world through the act of Creation—blessing the blessed Holy One for every single act, to sustain the existence of this world. Thus, in *Barukh she-amar*, Blessed be He who spoke: Blessed, blessed for all.[366]

"Third enhancement: enhancing [216a] the world above with all those potent forces and camps, by Hallelujah, Hallelujah: *Praise Him, all you stars of light…* (Psalms 148:3).[367]

"Fourth enhancement: enhancement by prayer, enhancing mystery of the Holy Name, as you said. Happy is your share! Here is mystery of enhancing the Holy Name. Happy is my share with you in this world and in the world that is coming![368]

"Commandments of Torah in prayer, of which you spoke —certainly so!"[369]

He opened, saying, "It is written: *YHVH your God you shall fear, Him you shall serve* (Deuteronomy 10:20), and it is written: *You shall fear* מאלהיך (*me-Elohekha*), *your God* (Leviticus 19:14). This verse should read as follows: *You shall fear* אלהיך (*Elohekha*), *your God*, since it is written אלהיך את יהוה (*Et YHVH Elohekha*), *YHVH your God, you shall fear*. Why *me-Elohekha*, *from your God*?

“Well, it is a mystery: *me-Elohekha, from your God*, surely! From that place joined to and surrounding the kernel within; this is *me-Elohekha, from your God*. This is the fear that one should feel, for there Judgment prevails—drawn to this place from Judgment above.[370]

“There is fire, and then there is fire—three kinds of fire here. The first fire is fire receiving fire in joy, rejoicing with one another in love.

“The second fire is fire of which is written *and a radiance surrounding it* (Ezekiel 1:4), for *radiance* appears there. This is fire existing joyously within inner fire, as has been said.

“The third fire is fire outside, surrounding that *radiance*, and in this fire prevails fear of Judgment, smiting the wicked.[371]

“Although we have learned that there are four kinds of fire—four that are one—here in the fire that we have mentioned prevails fear of Judgment, and thus it is written *You shall fear me-Elohekha, from your God*, from His punishment.[372]

“In that fear, a person should set his intention on fear and love as one, fearing on this side and loving on that side, in those aspects that we have mentioned. That fear should be of punishment, for one who transgresses commandments of Torah is punished by that side—because once that side begins to strike, it does not subside until it exterminates him from this world and from the world that is coming. Therefore one should fear this fire in which fear prevails.[373]

“From it spreads a fire outside, of another object of fear, of which is written *You shall not fear the gods of the nations* (Judges 6:10), for it is forbidden to fear it. The fire of fear that we mentioned is holy, partaking in holiness, and this surrounds that *radiance* that we mentioned. That other, outside fire sometimes joins this, and sometimes it withdraws, not joining. When stimulated to join this one, it

becomes a dark fire, darkening and covering the light of these others. Your mnemonic is: *flashing fire* (Ezekiel 1:4), not enduring constantly, as has been said.[374]

"Afterward, love, as has been established, for love settles after fear. Mystery of the matter: Once fear settles upon a person's head, love is afterward aroused on the right. For one who serves out of love cleaves to the supernal place above and is sanctified by holiness of the World that is Coming, since he ascends to be crowned and conjoined with the right side.[375]

"Now, if you say that service from the side of fear is not service—it is precious service, but it does not ascend to unite above. When one serves out of love, he ascends and is crowned above, cleaving to the World that is Coming. This is a person destined for the World that is Coming. Happy is his share, for he ascends to the site of fear and rules over it, since no one rules the rung of fear except love, mystery of the right.[376]

"Mystery of unity—for one who is worthy of the World that is Coming must unify the Name of the blessed Holy One, uniting limbs and rungs, bringing them all where they should be—binding the knot. This is the mystery written: *Hear, O Israel! YHVH our God, YHVH is one* (Deuteronomy 6:4). Mystery of שמע (*shema*), *hear*—שם (*shem*), a name, amounting to ע (*ayin*), seventy, names, one totality.[377]

"*Israel*—Israel the Elder, for there is a small one, as is written: *When Israel was a youth, I loved him* (Hosea 11:1), whereas this is Israel the Elder. One mystery in one totality: שמע (*Shema*), *Hear, O Israel*—here, Wife merges with Her Husband.[378]

"After they merge with one another in one whole, limbs must be unified [216b]—joining two Dwellings as one, with all limbs, in heartfelt devotion, ascending in cleaving to *Ein Sof*, uniting all there, becoming one will.[379]

"This mystery is יהיה (*yihyeh*), *will be*, as is said: *YHVH* יהיה (*yihyeh*), *will be, one* (Zechariah 14:9), in the mystery of

yihyeh: י (*yod*) uniting and joining with ה (*he*), an inner palace, treasury of this supernal point *yod*. This is the mystery of יהוה אלהינו (*YHVH Eloheinu*), *YHVH our God* (Deuteronomy 6:4)—those two letters, namely ה י (*yod, he*). And to include all those limbs in the place from which they issue, the inner palace—restoring entities to their place, to their essence, foundation, and root, to the site of the root of the Covenant.[380]

"Afterward, these two other letters, namely ה י (*yod, he*), uniting and joining *yod* with *he*. *Yod* is mystery of holy Covenant, and this *he* is a palace, treasury of this mystery of holy Covenant, which is *yod*. Although it is the second ו (*vav*), *yod* is its mystery, uniting them as one.[381]

"אחד (*Eḥad*), *one* (Deuteronomy 6:4)—to unify from there above, all as one, to elevate aspiration, binding all from below to above in a single bond, elevating aspiration in fear and love, above, above; not withholding intention from all those rungs and limbs, rather ascending with them all, to unite them, so that all may be one bond in *Ein Sof*.[382]

"This is the unification of Rav Hamnuna Sava, taught to him by his father, from the latter's teacher, reaching back to the mouth of Elijah. It is fine, a perfect unification. Although we have established this by various mysteries, and all those mysteries amount to one, still this mystery I found in his book, and it is fine, a perfect unification. We have already educed the meaning of the unification of another mystery, which is a fine and fitting unification—so it is! But this unification is a perfect unification; this is the unification of Rav Hamnuna Sava![383]

"He said further, 'Whoever wishes to include all mysteries of unification in the word אחד (*eḥad*), *one*—even finer! Therefore, we prolong *eḥad, one*, elevating aspiration —from above to below, from below to above—so that all becomes one.' However, this mystery—יהיה (*yihyeh*), *will be*—alludes to this.[384]

“As for what we have learned—that *eḥad, one*, mysteriously intimates above, below, and the four directions of the world—so it is! To unify above and below, as has been said; and the four directions of the world—mystery of the supernal Chariot, embracing all as one, in one bond, in single unity, until *Ein Sof*, as we have established.[385]

“Mystery of mentioning afterward the Exodus from Egypt—because *Shekhinah* was in exile, and when She is in exile there is no union, joining lower world with upper world. To demonstrate freedom, for that redemption was conveyed by many signs and many miracles performed by the blessed Holy One. That deliverance must be mentioned, demonstrating that although She was in exile, now She is free—ever since the day that those bonds of Egypt were undone and those signs and miracles performed.[386] Her liberation must be demonstrated, so that She joins Her Husband, and so that Redemption be joined to Prayer, all becoming one, with no separation—not demonstrating divorce. Your mnemonic is: *A woman divorced from her husband they shall not take as wife* (Leviticus 21:7).[387]

“Now, you might say, ‘Look, She is in exile, so She is divorced!’ Not so, Heaven forbid! Rather, She is surely in exile to dwell with Israel and to protect them, but She is not divorced. In fact, *Shekhinah* ceased to appear in the Second Temple and in the First Temple: before Israel went into exile She ascended on high, and afterward She made Her abode with them. But, Heaven forbid, there was never divorce![388]

“Therefore, one must demonstrate redemption, which includes four redemptions. Here lies a mystery: When *Shekhinah* left the exile of Egypt, She demanded from the blessed Holy One that He redeem Her now four times—those four redemptions corresponding to four exiles—so that She would be free and not divorced. At that moment, She was redeemed four times through the Exodus from Egypt. And now when She needs Her adornment, to unite

with Her Husband, one must display that redemption from Egypt, which includes four redemptions.[389]

"Therefore, we must [217a] mention in that redemption: 'True, true, true, true'—four times—until *Ezrat avoteinu*, [You have been] the Help of our fathers, for this is the help and support of all Israel. From there on, four other times 'true, true, true, true,' so that these four redemptions may endure firmly, sealed by the signet ring of the King—four double redemptions enduring.[390]

"All of them in that Exodus from Egypt—for if those four redemptions were not present in that Exodus, whenever exile would occur She would not join with Her adornments to unify the Holy Name. Therefore one should mention the redemption from Egypt in all sanctifications of the blessed Holy One, may He and His Name be blessed forever.[391]

"Mystery of the sanctification of His Name we have already established, for in *Qedushah*, Sanctification, all is sanctified, above and below; all rungs and all upper and lower chariots are sanctified in the holiness of their Lord. Concerning this mysterious *Qedushah*, we have established supernal mysteries for those masters of qualities who contemplate the holiness of their Lord. Happy is their share![392]

"Mystery of surrendering the soul to one's Lord—what you said, Companions, is fine. Happy is your share, and happy are my eyes that have witnessed this, for while still alive I have been privileged to see holy words aroused in this world, all of them inscribed above before the Holy King."[393]

He opened, saying, "*Then those who revere YHVH* נדברו (*nidberu*), *spoke, with one another; and YHVH listened attentively, and it was written in a book of remembrance before Him concerning those who revere YHVH and contemplate His name* (Malachi 3:16). This verse should be examined: *Then* נדברו (*nidberu*), *were spoken*. The verse should read דברו (*dibberu*), *spoke;* why *nidberu, were spoken*?

Well, they *were spoken* above all those holy chariots and all those holy forces. For those holy words ascend on high, and numerous beings hasten to carry them before the Holy King, where they are adorned with many crowns, with those supernal lights, and all of them are *spoken* before the supernal King. Who has seen such joy! Who has seen praises rising through all those heavens before the Holy King! He gazes upon them and is adorned with them. They ascend upon His head, becoming a crown; and descend, settling in His lap, in His potent bosom; and from there, ascending upon His head. Thus, Torah says, 'ואהיה (*Va-ehyeh*), *I will be, daily His delight*' (Proverbs 8:30)—it is not written והייתי (*Ve-hayiti*), *I was*, but rather *va-ehyeh, I will be*, whenever sublime words ascend before Him.[394]

"Here is written twice *those who revere YHVH, those who revere YHVH*—implying *those who revere YHVH* above, *those who revere YHVH* below: *those who revere YHVH* stand below, and by those words they stand above![395]

"This mystery I found in the Book of Enoch: All words of the righteous on earth are crowned and stand before the supernal King—descending to the place where the blessed Holy One delights in them, and standing before Him in the image of the righteous one who uttered them—and the blessed Holy One delights in that image. Afterward they are inscribed *in a book of remembrance before Him*, enduring before Him always.[396]

"*And those who contemplate His name* (Malachi 3:16). What does this mean? This has already been established, but—those who contemplate words of Torah to cleave to their Lord in mystery of the Holy Name, so as to know Him and absorb the wisdom of His Name in their heart. As is written: *and those who contemplate His name—His name*, precisely, mystery of the Holy Name.[397]

"It is written: *Above the firmament over their heads—like the appearance of sapphire, image of a throne* (Ezekiel 1:26). This verse has already been established, but above

לרקיע (*la-raqi'a*), *the firmament*, as you said, Companions—happy is my share and your share!—that רקיעא (*reqi'a*), heaven, below, for no one can gaze upon the heaven above. Above it stands that *sapphire*, whose meaning we have educed in mystery of the fine precious pearl, as we have established.[398]

"*Image of a throne*. It is not written *image of the throne*, for there is a throne, and then there is a throne—supernal, concealed, hidden throne, unrevealed, which no one can fathom, to know and contemplate. So it is written *a throne*, unspecified—the throne below.[399]

"*An image like the appearance of a human being* (Ezekiel 1:26). Since it says *an image*, why *like the appearance*, when *an image of a human being* would suffice? Well, *an image of a human being* is a supernal mystery of that supernal Glory—image of a human being. By adding *like the appearance*, the verse includes those images of words of wisdom and those mysteries of wisdom, [217b] ascending, adorned above, then assuming an image, and the blessed Holy One delights utterly in His crowns.[400]

"As for you, Companions, look, the blessed Holy One delights now with those words you uttered, with which you were crowned on the way! Look, you are standing before Him in your holy images! For when I saw you and gazed upon your images, I saw within you letters inscribed and engraved in mystery of אדם (*adam*), the human, and I knew that your image is stationed above. So are the righteous destined to be distinguished in the eyes of all, displaying a holy countenance before the whole world, as is written: *All who see them will recognize that they are seed YHVH has blessed* (Isaiah 61:9)."[401]

At that moment, he saw Rabbi Yose contemplating worldly matters. He said to him, "Yose, rise and complete your image, for one letter is missing in you."[402]

Rabbi Yose rose and rejoiced in words of Torah and stood before him. Rabbi Shim'on gazed upon him, and said

to him, “Rabbi Yose, now you are complete before the Ancient of Days!”[403]

He opened, saying, “*They made* צִיץ (*tsits*), *the medallion of, the holy diadem of pure gold*… (Exodus 39:30). Come and see: Why is it called *tsits*? Well, looking to see. Since it was intended for human observation, it is called *tsits*. Whoever looked at that *tsits* was thereby recognized.[404]

“In the *tsits* were letters of the Holy Name, inscribed and engraved. If the one standing before it was virtuous, then those letters engraved in the gold protruded from below upward, rising from that engraving radiantly, and they illumined that person’s face—a scintillation sparkled in him and did not sparkle. The first moment that the priest looked at him, he would see the radiance of all the letters in his face; but when he gazed intently he saw nothing but the radiance of his face shining, as if a sparkle of gold were scintillating. However, the priest knew from his first momentary glimpse that the blessed Holy One delighted in that person, and that he was destined for the world that is coming, because this vision issued from above and the blessed Holy One delighted in him. Then when they gazed upon him, they saw nothing, for a vision from above is revealed only for a moment.[405]

“If a person stood before the *tsits* and his face did not display momentarily a holy vision, the priest would know that he was brazen-faced, and he would have to plead for mercy on his behalf and seek atonement for him.”[406]

They made tsits, the medallion of, the holy diadem (Exodus 39:30).[407]

Rabbi Yehudah opened with a verse from Ruth: “*Let your eyes be on the field they are reaping, and follow after them. I have ordered the young men not to harm you* (Ruth 2:9). This verse should be contemplated; why did it have to be written here?”[408]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, “Well, there are many verses in Torah that seem as if they need not have been written, yet we see that all of them are sublime mysteries.”[409]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “As for this verse, whoever sees it and does not contemplate it is like someone who does not taste a dish. In fact, there is a mystery here, and it was uttered in the Holy Spirit. For Boaz, the Judge of Israel, saw the humility of that righteous woman—who did not move her eyes to look anywhere but in front of her, and saw whatever she saw with a benevolent eye, and had no impudence in her. So he praised her eyes.[410]

“For some eyes prevent blessing from prevailing in a place; but in her he saw a benevolent eye, for she gazed upon everything benevolently. Furthermore, he saw that everything prospered in her hands: the more she gleaned, the more was added in the field; and Boaz perceived that the Holy Spirit settled upon her. So, he opened, saying, ‘*Let your eyes be on the field they are reaping*, [*and follow after them*].’…Now, if you say that this refers to those gleaners, all those other ones, why did he tell her to follow after them? It should have been written *and glean after them*; why, *and follow after them*? Rather, he was referring to her eyes, which stimulated blessing and many gleanings. Thus, *and follow after them*—after *your eyes*. All other inhabitants of the world are not [218a] permitted to follow after their eyes, but as for you: after *your eyes*, for *your eyes* stimulate many blessings.[411]

“Alternatively, *Let your eyes be on the field they are reaping*. Through the Holy Spirit, Boaz saw that supernal holy eyes were destined to issue from her, eyes of all—as from Tamar, of whom is written *She sat in the opening of Eyes* (Genesis 38:14). She sat in the opening from which issue kings and supernal eyes—called *eyes*, as is said: *If from the eyes of the community* (Numbers 15:24). For all members of the body follow only the eyes, and the eyes conduct the whole body. Similarly, kings, members of the

Sanhedrin, and all rulers—everyone follows them, as all members follow the eyes. This is why he said to her *your eyes*, who are kings and rulers destined to issue from her.[412]

"*In the field* (Ruth 2:9). Who is *the field*? Zion and Jerusalem, as is written: *Zion will be plowed like a field* (Micah 3:12), and it is written: *like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH* (Genesis 27:27)—Jerusalem. Thus it is written: *Let your eyes be in the field*—for those eyes of hers, destined to issue from her, would rule only *in the field*.[413]

"*That they are reaping* (Ruth 2:9)—for from that *field* all inhabitants of the world gathered Torah and shining light, as is written: *For from Zion will come forth Torah* (Isaiah 2:3).[414]

"*And follow after them* (Ruth 2:9)—by these worthy deeds that I myself have seen in you.[415]

"*Have I not ordered the young men* [*not to touch you*]? (ibid.)—literally, for a woman's mind is easily swayed.[416]

"*And if you are thirsty* (ibid.)—adopting a euphemism. *And if you are thirsty*—if you desire to cleave to a man to raise seed in the world—*go to the vessels* (ibid.), namely the righteous, who are called *vessels of YHVH*, as is written: *you who bear the vessels of YHVH* (Isaiah 52:11). For the righteous are destined to be brought by the whole world as a gift for King Messiah, and they are *vessels of YHVH*. And the vessels in which the blessed Holy One delights are those broken vessels—broken in this world for the sake of fulfilling Torah. And in making use of vessels, the blessed Holy One utilizes only those. And when you cleave to them, *and drink*… (Ruth, ibid.)."[417]

Rabbi Yose opened, "*Boaz ate and drank and his heart was glad* (ibid. 3:7). What does this mean: *and his heart was glad*? That he recited a blessing over his food, as they have established. This is the mystery: Whoever recites a blessing over his food gladdens his heart. And whom does he

gladden? As is written: *To You he said, 'My heart'* (Psalms 27:8), and it is written: *rock of my heart* (ibid. 73:26). For Grace after Meals is precious to the blessed Holy One, and whoever offers a blessing over being satisfied gladdens and delights another place. The meals of Sabbath demonstrate that another place enjoys that satiation and delight; here too it enjoyed the satisfaction of the righteous Boaz, and thus *his heart was glad*.[418]

"Why? Because providing food is difficult for the blessed Holy One—that place—and once a person eats and drinks and blesses, that blessing ascends and [that place] enjoys those rising words of satisfaction. Consequently, it derives joy from food below and above. This is a mystery from the Companions.[419]

"Mystery of weekdays: It enjoys only those words ascending out of satisfaction. All those words are crowned, satiated with joy, and that place delights in them.

"On Sabbath, another mystery: in the actual food and in the joy of food consumed for the *mitsvah* of Sabbath. It becomes comprised of all, from above and from below. This is the mystery of *For all is from You, and from Your hand have we given You* (1 Chronicles 29:14)—*have we given You*, really, by this enjoyment and by the delight of food for the *mitsvah* of Sabbath, as has been established.[420]

"Whoever blesses the blessed Holy One out of satisfaction should focus his heart and set his intention on joy; he should not be in sadness, but rather should bless joyously in this mystery, intending that he is now giving to another generously. Just as he is blessing joyously and generously, so will he be given joyously and generously. Therefore he should not be sad at all, but rather in joy and in words of Torah, setting his heart and will on conveying this blessing in essential mystery.[421]

"A mystery here: Four chariots ruling in four directions are nourished by that blessing over satisfaction; and by those words 'Blessed are You, *YHVH*,' [*Shekhinah*] is delighted,

enhanced, and crowned. Whoever offers a blessing should intend it joyously and generously, and therefore it is written: *He that has a generous eye* יְבֹרָךְ (*yevarekh*), *shall bless* (Proverbs 22:9). Here, look at the end of the verse: *For he gives of his bread to the poor* (ibid.). For if you don't agree, the beginning of this verse does not match its end, nor the end its beginning! However, *He that has a generous* [218b] *eye*, as we have established, *yevarekh, shall bless*, surely—generously, joyously. And not for nothing should one bless joyously, for from that food and blessing and by that joy of satisfaction *he gives of his bread to the poor*—the place that needs to be nourished from all sides, the place that has nothing of its own, the place that enjoys on all sides. These words have been transmitted only to the wise, to know paths of Torah.[422]

"Come and see: Boaz had a benevolent eye and was never brazen-faced. What is written? *He went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain* (Ruth 3:7)—mystery of what is written: *Your belly is a heap of wheat* (Song of Songs 7:3). From here we learn that whoever recites Grace after Meals properly—with joy and heartfelt devotion—when he ascends from this world there is a place prepared for him within supernal mysteries, in holy palaces. Happy is the person who observes the commandments of Torah and knows their worth! For upon every single commandment depend supernal mysteries and supernal radiancies; yet people do not know, nor do they care about the glory of their Lord. Happy is the share of the righteous, for they engage in Torah! Happy are they in this world and in the world that is coming![423]

"Come and see: They have said that all the brazen-faced who are shameless have no share in this world nor in the world that is coming. All the brazen-faced of Israel, when they gazed upon the *tsits*, became broken-hearted and examined their deeds. For the *tsits* existed miraculously, and

whoever looked at it felt ashamed of his deeds; thus the *tsits* atoned for the brazen-faced.[424]

"Letters of the mystery of the Holy Name engraved on the *tsits* shone, protruding and sparkling. And whoever looked at the sparkle of letters—his face would fall in fear and his heart would shatter. Thereby the *tsits* atoned for him, since it caused his heart to break and induced him to surrender before his Lord.[425]

"Similarly, incense: Whoever smelled the smoke, as a column rose from the smoke-raiser, became cleansed of heart, refined in radiant joy to serve his Lord. The filth of the evil impulse disappeared from him, leaving him with only one heart toward his Father in heaven; for incense actually disintegrates the evil impulse in all aspects. Just as the *tsits* existed miraculously, so did the incense, for nothing in the world breaks the Other Side except incense.[426]

"Come and see what is written: *Take the fire-pan and place fire upon it from the altar and put in incense*. Why? *For the fury has gone forth from before YHVH, the plague has begun!* (Numbers 17:11). For look, nothing breaks that side except incense, since nothing is as beloved to the blessed Holy One as incense! Consequently, it can eliminate sorcery and evil elements from the home. If the fragrance and smoke of incense prepared by people for that purpose has the power to eliminate, all the more so [holy] incense.[427]

"This matter is an established decree before the blessed Holy One: Whoever contemplates and reads every day the Preparation of the Incense will be saved from all elements of sorcery in the world, from all mishaps, evil fantasies, and pestilence. He will not be harmed that entire day, for the Other Side has no power over him—but he must focus his intention on it."[428]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "If human beings knew how exalted the Preparation of the Incense was in the eyes of the blessed Holy One, they would take every single word and raise it as a crown upon their heads, like a crown of gold.

Whoever engages in the Preparation of the Incense and concentrates upon it every day has a share in this world and in the world that is coming. Pestilence will disappear from him and from the world, and he will be delivered from all judgments and all evil aspects of this world, from the judgment of the alien kingdom, and even from the judgment of Hell.[429]

"In that incense, as the smoke rose in a column, the priest would see letters of mystery of the Holy Name [219a] dispersing in the air, ascending in that column. Afterward, numerous holy chariots surrounding it on all sides until it ascends, delighting whom it delights and forging links to unify all. We have already established דמקטר קטרין (*di-mqattar qitrin*), that it forges links. And this atones for the evil impulse and idolatry, which is the Other Side, as they have established.[430]

"*He made* מזבח (*mizbeaḥ*), *an altar, for burning incense*… (Exodus 30:1). This verse should be contemplated, for there were two altars: an altar for ascent offerings and an altar for aromatic incense, the former outside and the latter inside. This altar of incense was inner; why is it called *mizbeaḥ, a slaughter-site*, since no animals were sacrificed on it, and a *mizbeaḥ* is named for that?[431]

"Well, because it nullifies and binds many evil aspects, rendering them powerless and unable to accuse; so it is called *mizbeaḥ, a slaughter-site*. When that Other Side saw the incense rising, he was subdued, and fled, and could not approach the Dwelling at all. And since no one but the blessed Holy One attained or mingled in that joy above, and since it is so beloved, that altar stands inward, within; for this is the altar where blessing is found, so it is concealed from the eye.[432]

"What is written of Aaron? *He stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was halted* (Numbers 17:13), for he bound the Angel of Death, rendering him completely powerless and unable to execute judgment. This sign has

been transmitted to us, that wherever the Preparation of the Incense is uttered with intention and heartfelt devotion, he cannot rule and no one can be harmed, and other nations have no dominion there.[433]

"Come and see what is written: *an altar* מקטר קטרת (*miqtar qetoret*), *for burning incense* (Exodus 30:1). Since it is written *an altar*, why *miqtar qetoret, for burning incense*? Well, because from this place derives לאתקטרא (*le-itqatara*), being bound, as Aaron did.[434]

"Furthermore, the altar must be offered incense and sanctified by that incense; thus, *miqtar qetoret, for burning incense*.[435]

"Furthermore, *miqtar qetoret*—according to its translation: לאקטרא קטרת (*le-aqtara qetoret*), to burn incense, for it is forbidden to burn incense anywhere else except in the fire-pan.[436]

"Come and see: One who is pursued by Judgment needs this incense and must turn back to his Lord, for this helps to remove judgments from him. Thereby they surely withdraw from him, if he regularly recites this twice a day, in the morning and in the evening—as is written: *aromatic incense morning after morning*, and it is written: *At twilight he shall burn it* (Exodus 30:7–8). This sustains the world perpetually, as is written: *a perpetual incense before YHVH throughout your generations* (ibid., 8). This sustains the world below and sustains the world above.[437]

"Wherever the Preparation of the Incense is not recited daily, judgments from above prevail, and many plagues, and other nations gain dominion there. For it is written: *a perpetual incense before YHVH*—enduring perpetually *before YHVH*, more than all other rituals. The Preparation of the Incense is more beloved than all rituals and devotions in the world. Even though prayer is most exalted of all, the Preparation of the Incense is precious and beloved to the blessed Holy One.[438]

“Come and see: What is the difference between prayer and the Preparation of the Incense? Prayer was instituted to replace the sacrifices that Israel used to offer, and none of those sacrifices that they offered was as important as the incense. Furthermore, what is the difference between this and that? Well, prayer is restoration, restoring as needed. Incense does more: restoring, forging links, and producing radiance greater than all. What is that? Removing filth and purifying the Dwelling—all is illumined, restored, and linked as one. Therefore we must remove filth from the world, thereby restoring all, every single day—like that beloved offering, in which the blessed Holy One delighted.[439]

“What is written of Moses? *Take for yourself fragrant spices* (Exodus 30:34). Although this has already been established; still, why is this event so different—*Take for yourself*—than everything else that He said to him? Well, *Take for yourself*—for your pleasure and for your benefit, because when a woman is purified, this provides pleasure to her husband. This is the mystery of *Take for yourself fragrant spices*—to remove filth, so that the Woman may be joined with Her Husband. Happy is the share [219b] of Moses![440]

“Similarly, *Take for yourself a calf from the herd* (Leviticus 9:2)—which was spoken to Aaron, to atone for his sin with the calf, which he brought upon Israel. Therefore it is written of Moses *Take for yourself*—for your pleasure and for your benefit. And so they have established concerning פסל (*Pesol*), *Carve, for yourself* (Exodus 34:1)—from the פסולת (*pesolet*), chips, of the stone tablets Moses became rich. Here too, *Take for yourself*—for your benefit.[441]

“קטרת (*Qetoret*), Incense, forges links, generates radiance, and removes filth. ד (*Dalet*) joins ה (*he*); *he* joins ו (*vav*); *vav* ascends to be crowned with *he*; *he* is illumined by י (*yod*); and Will raises all to *Ein Sof*—all becoming a single bond, one bond in one mystery, supreme bond of all.[442]

“From here on, since all is bound in this bond, all is crowned with mystery of *Ein Sof*, and mystery of the Holy Name is illumined and crowned on all sides, and all worlds are in joy, lamps are illumined, nourishment and blessings are found in all worlds—all by mystery of incense. And if filth is not removed, none of this happens; so all depends on this.[443]

“Come and see: Incense is always first, preceding all. Therefore, the Preparation of the Incense must precede prayer, songs, and praises, since none of these ascends, is arranged, or linked until filth is first removed. What is written? *He shall purge the Shrine*, first, and afterward *of their transgressions, including all their sins* (Leviticus 16:16). Therefore, one should purge the Shrine, removing filth, so that the Shrine may be purified—and afterward, songs, praises, and prayers, all as we have said.[444]

“Happy are Israel in this world and in the world that is coming, for they know how to restore above and below! When necessary, to restore from below to above, until all is bound as one in a single bond, in that supreme bond. When we need to restore below, we must arrange inscribed letters by which the blessed Holy One is named.”[445]

Rabbi Shim’on and his son, Rabbi El’azar, were sitting one night, studying Torah. Rabbi El’azar said to his father, Rabbi Shim’on, “It is written: *To the woman He said, ‘I will greatly increase your birth pangs, with pain will you bear children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you’* (Genesis 3:16). And we have learned that this is a supernal mystery. Granted, below; but if it corresponds above, what can be said?”[446]

Rabbi Shim’on opened, saying, “*As a hart yearns for streams of water*… (Psalms 42:2). This verse has been established; but there is a living being in the world who has dominion over a thousand keys every day. She is female, and her constant desire is *for streams of water*—to drink

and quench her thirst, as is written: *As a hart yearns for streams of water*.[447]

"Here one should contemplate. First it is written כאיל (*ke-ayyal*), *as a hart*, and not כאילת (*ke-ayyelet*), *as a hind*; yet then תערוג (*ta'arog*), (*she*) *yearns*, and not יערוג (*ya'arog*), (*he*) *yearns*. However, this mystery is male and female as one, not to be separated; it is one. This must not be removed from that, rather both as one.[448]

"This female *ta'arog, yearns, for streams of water* and is impregnated by the male. But it is difficult for Her, for She exists and delivers in Judgment. The blessed Holy One summons for Her a great, supernal serpent, who comes and bites that place, and She gives birth. This is the mystery of *I will greatly increase your birth pangs*, for She writhes every day, immersed in anguish, because of the deeds of the whole world. *With pain will you bear children*—mystery of the Serpent, who pains the faces of the world.[449]

"*Your desire will be for your husband*—as is said: *yearns for streams of water*.

"*And he will rule over you*—we have already established the mystery, that He has dominion over Her. Why all this? Because the moon spoke, as we have learned, and consequently She diminished Her light and Her dominion, and She has no authority of Her own except when She is granted power.[450]

"*With pain will you bear children*—as we have established. Now, you might ask, 'Why is the Serpent needed for this?' Well, this one opens a way for all those souls of the world to emerge. And if he did not open ways to descend, [the soul] would not dwell within a human being.[451]

"What is written? *At the opening crouches sin* (Genesis 4:7). What does *at the opening* mean? At the *opening* stimulated to give birth, bringing forth souls into the world—he is poised by that *opening*. But as for all those souls who must descend into holy bodies, he is not poised by that

opening, and has no power over that soul. Otherwise, the Serpent bites and that river is defiled, and it is not a purified soul.[452]

"Here is a supernal mystery: *With pain will you bear children*. This mystery is the Serpent, for [220a] with him She bears souls, because this one is over the body and that one is over the soul—both with one another: this one grasping the soul and that one grasping the body.[453]

"This Serpent is destined to deliver all those bodies before his time, as is written: *Before she was in labor, she gave birth* (Isaiah 66:7). A serpent's period of gestation is seven years, yet here six, which is not his time. And at the time that he gives birth to them, from that birth he will die, as is written: *He will swallow up death forever* (ibid. 25:8), and it is written: *Your dead will live, my corpses will arise* (ibid. 26:19)."[454]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "At that time when the dead of the world will awaken, they will awaken in the Holy Land and will arise as legions upon legions, all in the land of Galilee. For there King Messiah is destined to reveal himself, since that is the portion of Joseph—and there they were first broken, and from there they began to be exiled from their place and scattered among the nations, as is said: *They are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph* (Amos 6:6).[455]

"Why will they rise there? Because that is the portion of the one who was placed בארונא (*ba-arona*), in a coffin, as is written: *He was placed* בארון (*ba-aron*), *in a coffin, in Egypt* (Genesis 50:26), and subsequently he was buried in the Holy Land, as is written: *The bones of Joseph, which the Children of Israel had brought up from Egypt, they buried in Shechem* (Joshua 24:32). This is the one who preserved the covenant enduringly more than anyone.[456]

"At the time when they will all awaken, legions upon legions, they will each go to the portion of their ancestors, as is written: *You shall go back each man to his holding, and each man to his clan you shall go back* (Leviticus 25:10),

and they will recognize one another. The blessed Holy One intends to clothe each and every one in an embroidered garment, and they will all come and praise their Lord in Jerusalem, gathering there in multitudes. And Jerusalem will expand in all directions, more than it expanded when they gathered there from exile.[457]

"Once they gather and praise their Lord, the blessed Holy One will rejoice with them, as is written: *They will come and shout for joy on the heights of Zion, and they will flow to the bounty of YHVH* (Jeremiah 31:12)—each and every one to his share and the share of his ancestors. The inheritance of Israel will extend to the heights of Rome, where they will study Torah, as has already been established. And it is written: *Awake and shout for joy, O dwellers of the dust!* (Isaiah 26:19)."[458]

פרשת פקודי

Parashat Pequdei

“RECKONINGS” (EXODUS 38:21—40:38)

These are the reckonings of the Dwelling, the Dwelling of Testimony, that were reckoned by the mouth of Moses… (Exodus 38:21). Rabbi Ḥiyya opened, “*All the streams flow to the sea, yet the sea is not full; to the place the streams flow, there they continue to flow* (Ecclesiastes 1:7). This verse has been established and discussed; but *all the streams*—mysteries of holy streams and springs, full and gushing; holy springs illumining and filling this great sea. Once this great sea is filled by those streams, it overflows and waters all beasts of the field, as is said: *They water all beasts of the field* (Psalms 104:11). What is written previously? *Letting loose springs in streams* (ibid., 10); and afterward, *They water all beasts of the field*—those chariots below. For when the sea gathers them, it gathers them all, drawing them in; and then it issues water in the other direction, to holy chariots below, watering them. All of these are counted and reckoned by name, as is said: *He calls them each by name*… (Isaiah 40:26). Therefore, *These are the reckonings of the Dwelling*.”[1]

These are the reckonings of the Dwelling. Rabbi Yose opened, “*How abundant Your goodness that You have hidden for those in awe of You, that You have wrought for those who shelter in You before the eyes of humankind!* (Psalms 31:20). *How abundant Your goodness*—how deeply humans should know and contemplate the ways of the blessed Holy One, for every single day [220b] a voice issues,

proclaiming: ‘Beware, inhabitants of the world! Lock the doors of sin; keep away from the seizing net, before your feet are caught!’[2]

“A wheel spins constantly, ascending and descending. Woe to those whose feet are pushed away from the wheel! They fall into the depth concealed for the wicked of the world. Woe to those who fall, never to rise and be illumined by the light treasured away for the righteous! Happy are the righteous in the world that is coming, for many lights are stored away for them, many delights concealed for them in that world, as is written: *How abundant Your goodness that You have hidden for those in awe of You. How abundant Your goodness*—as they have established, the light treasured away for the righteous in the world that is coming, as is written: *God saw the light, that it was good* (Genesis 1:4), and it is written: *Light is sown for the righteous, joy for the upright in heart* (Psalms 97:11). Thus, *How abundant Your goodness*—here is written *How abundant Your goodness*, and it is written: *God saw the light, that it was good*.

“*That You have hidden*—for the blessed Holy One gazed by that light and saw the wicked who were destined to sin in the world, so He hid that light away, for the righteous to attain in the world that is coming, as has been said.[3]

“*That You have wrought* (Psalms 31:20). First, *You have hidden*, and then, *You have wrought*. Well, *You have hidden*, as has been said; *You have wrought*—for with the light that He hid away, the blessed Holy One wrought the artistry of the world. How do we know? As is written: *These are the generations of heaven and earth* בהבראם (*be-hibbare’am*), *when they were created* (Genesis 2:4)—באברהם (*be-Avraham*), through Abraham. That light of Abraham was hidden away by the blessed Holy One, and with it He wrought artistry, as is written: *that You have wrought*.[4]

“*For those who shelter in You* (Psalms 31:20)—for those who sit beneath the shade of the blessed Holy One.

"*Before the eyes of humankind* (ibid.)—for through the artistry fashioned by this light, humans exist in the world; it is their sustenance. Although it is hidden away, people thereby endure in the world.[5]

"*That you have wrought*—artistry of the world, for thereby all was fashioned precisely. Artistry of the world—corresponding to artistry of the Dwelling, whose artistry resembles the world, as we have established: here is written *These are the reckonings of the Dwelling* (Exodus 38:21), and there is written *These are the generations of heaven and earth* (Genesis 2:4). For all those generations produced by heaven and earth were produced by the power of that hidden light, and *the reckonings of the Dwelling* issued from that power. How do we know? As is written: *Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur* (Exodus 38:22)—from the right side. *And with him was Oholiab* (ibid., 23)—from the left side. The Dwelling was erected and formed from left and right, and Moses, who was between them, erected it."[6]

Rabbi El'azar opened, "*In love will a throne be established, and he will sit upon it in truth, in the tent of David, judging and seeking justice and zealous for righteousness* (Isaiah 16:5). *In love will a throne be established*—as we have established, when Thought arises in joyous Will from Concealed of all Concealed, unknown and ungrasped, that joy reaches and strikes Thought, which then enters where it enters, until it is treasured away in a certain supernal palace concealed above. From there flow all lights to the right, which absorbs first, and then they all absorb. From that right side the Throne below is established, for the blessed Holy One establishes that Throne *in love*.[7]

"*He will sit upon it in truth*—perfection of the seal of all. He sits upon that Throne only with this seal, which is *truth*.[8]

"*In the tent of David*—the Throne below.[9]

"*Judging and seeking justice and zealous for righteousness. Judging*—from the side of Judgment. *And*

seeking justice—from the side of Compassion. *And zealous for righteousness*—Throne of Judgment, which is the Lower Court.[10]

"Come and see: Similarly, the Dwelling was established only on the side of Love, as we have said. Thus, generations were enumerated and all of them established below."[11]

These are the reckonings of the Dwelling, the Dwelling of Testimony, that were reckoned by the mouth of Moses (Exodus 38:21). Rabbi Shim'on opened, "*In the beginning God created heaven and earth* (Genesis 1:1). [221a] We have already established this in various aspects. However, when the blessed Holy One created the world, He created it on the pattern above, so that this world would be in the image of the world above. All facets above He established below, so that one world would be joined and linked with the other.[12]

"When the blessed Holy One contemplated creating the world, He gazed into Torah and created it, and He contemplated the Holy Name, totality of Torah, and established the world. By three aspects was the world established: Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge, as is written: *YHVH by wisdom founded the earth; He established the heavens by understanding; by His knowledge the depths were burst* (Proverbs 3:19–20)—all of them vital to the existence of the world. And by these three the Dwelling was built, as is written: *I have filled him with the spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, and with knowledge* (Exodus 31:3). All three of them are intimated in this verse: *In the beginning* corresponds to *with wisdom*; *God created* corresponds to *with understanding*; *heaven* corresponds to *with knowledge*. All are mentioned in making the Dwelling, and in this mystery is written *These are the reckonings of the Dwelling*—mystery of Wisdom. *The Dwelling of Testimony*—mystery of Understanding. *That were reckoned by the mouth of Moses*—mystery of Knowledge. All

corresponding to one another, for everything that the blessed Holy One created in this world, He created above, and all was traced in making the Dwelling.[13]

"Come and see: When the blessed Holy One told Moses, 'Make Me a dwelling,' Moses stood bewildered because he did not know what to do—until the blessed Holy One showed him how it looked, as is written: *See, and make it by their pattern that you are being shown on the mountain* (Exodus 25:40). What does *by their pattern* mean? Well, we have learned that the blessed Holy One showed Moses the form of every single thing according to the form that it has above, and the form of every single thing [above] was fashioned like the form fashioned on earth.[14]

"*That you* מראה (*mar'eh*), *are being shown, on the mountain*—the verse should read *that you see*. However, we have learned that the speculum that does not shine showed him within itself all those forms and all those shapes made below, like a mirror reflecting all forms within itself. This is implied by what is written: *that you mar'eh, are being shown. You*—mystery of the speculum that does not shine, which showed him within itself all those forms; and Moses saw them—every single thing perfectly—like someone looking at a [shiny] bar of metal or into a mirror reflecting all forms. When Moses saw them, he was perplexed. The blessed Holy One said to him, 'Moses, you with your signs [and I with My Glory].' Then Moses felt calm about the whole project.[15]

"When all the work had been completed, Moses had to account for everything, so that Israel would not say that some silver and gold was left over and he was reserving it for himself. So he had to render an account in the presence of Israel, for it is written: *You shall be blameless before YHVH and before Israel* (Numbers 32:22). Therefore it is written: *These are the reckonings of the Dwelling, the Dwelling of Testimony*, for the Holy Spirit displayed to everyone an account of the Dwelling—of all the silver and gold that Israel had donated—and the Holy Spirit said, *The silver*

reckoned from the community was a hundred talents. …*All the gold that was used for the work*… [*was twenty-nine talents*]… (Exodus 38:25, 24). For the blessed Holy One was pleased with those artisans and wanted to display their trustworthiness before all.[16]

"*These are the reckonings of the Dwelling*. Come and see: As the work on the Dwelling was proceeding, the Other Side would go roaming, but he was unable to accuse and could find no pretext to impugn the trustworthiness of the artisans. Finally, the blessed Holy One subdued him before Moses, and against his will he rendered an account of their trustworthiness, which rose in the sight of all. This is the mystery of what is written: *These are the reckonings of the Dwelling*. We have already established *these*, as is said: *Even these will be forgotten* (Isaiah 49:15); and it is written: *that were reckoned by the mouth of Moses* (Exodus 38:21), for there he was counted and reckoned until the accounting of the Dwelling was rendered in the presence of Moses and all of Israel.[17] [221b]

"*These are the reckonings of the Dwelling, the Dwelling of Testimony* (Exodus 38:21). Who is *Testimony*? Well, *Dwelling* is written here twice: one above and one below. And the Dwelling is called *the Dwelling of Testimony*. Who is *Testimony*? As is said: *the tribes of Yah, a testimony to Israel* (Psalms 122:4). Similarly, *A testimony He ordained it in Joseph* (ibid. 81:6)—ביהוסף (*bi-Yhosef*), *in Joseph*, the name יה (*Yah*) is surely *testimony*. These two letters render testimony everywhere, and here it is *testimony*. Therefore, *the Dwelling of Testimony*—Dwelling of this *Testimony*. Thus, the Dwelling is called by mystery of this Holy Name—corresponding to what is written: *My testimony that I will teach them* (Psalms 132:12), for this place is secrecy and hiddenness of all.[18]

"*That were reckoned by the mouth of Moses* (Exodus 38:21). Until here we do not know whether the Dwelling was *reckoned* or this *Testimony*. But surely, this *Testimony*

was *reckoned*, for ever since the patriarchs departed from the world, and then all those tribes, the sons of Jacob, and Israel was left in exile and distress, the knowledge of the mystery of this supernal Holy Name was forgotten by them—the name of *Testimony* of the endurance of heaven and earth, for these two letters established above and below and all directions of the world. When Moses came, this Name was reckoned and recalled in the world; for when he was at the bush, he immediately asked about this Name, as is written: *When they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?* (Exodus 3:13). And there this Name was recalled *by the mouth of Moses*.[19]

"*The service of the Levites* (Exodus 38:21). What is *the service of the Levites*? Well, this is the mystery of what is written: *The Levite will serve* הוא (*hu*), *he* (Numbers 18:23)—*hu*, *he*, mystery of the Holy Name called *hu*, *he*, and not called אתה (*attah*), *you*. Thus, *the service of the Levites*, surely![20]

"Alternatively, *the service of the Levites*—for they carry the Dwelling on their shoulders from place to place, as is written: *To the sons of Kohath he did not give, for the service of the sanctuary is upon them, on the shoulder would they carry* (Numbers 7:9)."[21]

These are the reckonings of the Dwelling, the Dwelling of Testimony (Exodus 38:21). Rabbi Abba opened, "*On that day the root of Jesse, standing as a banner for the peoples—nations will seek him and his resting place will be glorious* (Isaiah 11:10). *On that day*—when the blessed Holy One will increase peace in the world, the root of the Tree of Life will be firmly established; for by that root are sustained other roots below, all rooted and sustained thereby.[22]

"*Standing as a banner for the peoples*—for this stands as a banner and a sign of mystery of the Holy Name.

"*Nations will seek him*—for there is the mystery of existence of the Holy Name; so *nations will seek him*, as is

said: *Many nations will go and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of YHVH and to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His paths.' For from Zion will come forth Torah, and the word of YHVH from Jerusalem* (Micah 4:2). Thus, *nations will seek him*.

"*And his resting place will be glorious—his resting place* is the Temple. כבוד (*Kavod*), *Glorious*—for so it will be called in that time: *Kavod*, Glory, as is written: *The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold* (Isaiah 30:26). The *resting place* of that *root of Jesse*, called Glory of *YHVH*, will never be counted nor susceptible to calculation. Why? Because now it *is* susceptible to calculation, but in that time it will not be. Why? Because blessings do not completely settle upon anything that can be counted; blessings settle upon that which cannot be counted. The first time, it was susceptible to calculation, as is written: *These are the reckonings of the Dwelling, the Dwelling of Testimony*.[23]

"Come and see: This Dwelling was susceptible to calculation, and therefore it needed the prayer of Moses for blessings to settle upon it, as is written: *Moses blessed them* (Exodus 39:43). What blessing did he give them? 'May it be the Will that blessing settle upon the work of your hands.' And no blessings settled upon this counting until Moses bound it above, as is written: *These are the reckonings of the Dwelling, the Dwelling of Testimony, that were reckoned by the word of Moses*—for if the counting had not been performed by Moses, they could not have done it, as is written: *that were reckoned by the word of Moses*."[24]

He opened, saying, "*The word of YHVH came to Elijah…. 'Rise, go to Zarephath of Sidon, and stay there; behold, I have commanded a widow there to sustain you'* (1 Kings 17:8–9). Now, where did the blessed Holy One command her? Well, before [Elijah] came to the world, the blessed Holy One issued a decree above that the ravens should

bring food to Elijah and that this woman should bring him food. What is written? [222a] *She said, 'As YHVH lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug…'* (ibid., 12). Now, here is a measurement of that flour, containing only *a handful of flour in a jar*—that is its measure—and it is not fitting that any blessings should settle upon it since it can be measured. Yet what is written? *For thus says YHVH, the God of Israel: The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not be empty until the day that YHVH gives rain* (ibid., 14). תת (*Tet*), *gives*—written as תתן (*titten*), *you will give*. Why? Because in the whole generation there was no one as worthy as this woman, and therefore it is written *titten*—*you will give* rain upon the world since your merit is so great.[25]

"It is written: *The jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil was not empty, just as YHVH had spoken through Elijah* (1 Kings 17:16). Now if that flour—which was susceptible to measurement, being *a handful of flour*—did not run out of blessings by virtue of the word of Elijah, as is written: *The jar of oil was not used up*, then *the Dwelling of Testimony*, although susceptible to counting, because it was reckoned by Moses all the more so do blessings dwell within it! Therefore it is written: *These are the reckonings of the Dwelling, the Dwelling of Testimony, that were reckoned by the word of Moses*."[26]

These are the reckonings of the Dwelling, the Dwelling of Testimony (Exodus 38:21). Rabbi Ḥizkiyah opened, "*He said, 'Come no closer here. Remove your sandals from your feet…'* (Exodus 3:5). This verse has been established, but they have surely established that the blessed Holy One separated him from his wife so as to cleave to *Shekhinah*, as is written: *for the place you are standing on is holy ground* (ibid.)—*holy ground* is *Shekhinah*. Moses cleaved in holy union above, and when the blessed Holy One bound him in heavenly love, he was appointed chief steward of the house.

He would decree, and the blessed Holy One would enact, as is written: [*If*] *the ground gapes open its mouth* [*and swallows them*], and it is written: *And it happened, just as he finished speaking* [*all these words, the ground that was under them split apart, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them*…] (Numbers 16:30–32). And it is written: *Arise, O YHVH! Return, O YHVH!* (ibid. 10:35–36). Why? As is written: that פקד (*puqqad*), *were reckoned, by the word of Moses* (Exodus 38:21)—*by the word of Moses* it was arranged ואתפקד (*ve-itpaqqad*), and commanded, entirely.[27]

"פקודי (*Piqqudei*), *the reckonings of, the Dwelling*—for here existed פקידא (*peqida*), taking account. *That* פקד (*puqqad*), *were reckoned, by the word of Moses*—as is written: פקד פקדתי (*Paqod paqadti*), *I have surely taken account, of you* (Exodus 3:16). *Peqida*, taking account, is by Moses, for he was the voice uttering speech, taking account of Her to come forth from exile, and now She was taken account of so that holiness would be drawn from above to below, as is written: *Have them make Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell among them* (ibid. 25:8)."[28]

Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur from the tribe of Judah (Exodus 38:22).

Rabbi Yehudah said, "As has been said, Bezalel was of the right side, and he arranged everything perfectly. Furthermore, Judah was ruler and king over all the other tribes, and from him issued the one who arranged the whole Dwelling.

"בצלאל (*Betsal'el*), Bezalel—as has been established: בצל אל (*be-tsel El*), in the shadow of God. And who is in the shadow of God? The right side. Furthermore, from this side he arranged everything, inheriting wisdom to accomplish all the work.[29]

"*And with him was Oholiab son of Ahisamach from the tribe of Dan* (Exodus 38:23)—from the left side, namely

from the side of strict Judgment. As they have established, from these two sides was the Dwelling made—configured by them, to be joined with them, between right and left, as has been said and established."[30]

He opened, saying, "*Beautiful in loftiness, joy of all the earth*… (Psalms 48:3). Come and see: When the blessed Holy One created the world, He cast one precious stone from beneath His Throne of Glory, and it sank into the abyss. The edge of that stone was wedged in the depths, with the other edge above. That other, upper edge is a single point located in the middle of the world, from which the world expanded to the right and to the left, while that point perdured in the middle. That stone is called שתיה (*shetiyyah*), Foundation, because from it the world אשתיל (*ishetil*), disseminated, to all sides. Furthermore, שתיה (*shetiyyah*)—יה שת (*shat Yah*), *Yah* set: the blessed Holy One set it to be the foundation of the world, the planting of all.[31]

"In three [222b] ways the earth expanded around that point. In the first expansion around that point exists all clarity and purity of the earth, right there, and this is located above, over the whole earth, around that point.

"The second expansion, around that first expansion, is clarity and purity, though not like the first; it is rarefied and clear with the clarity of dust, more than any other dust.

"The third expansion is darkness and coarsest dust of all, and around this lie waters of the ocean, surrounding the whole world. Consequently, that point stands in the center, with all those types of the world's expansion around it.

"The first expansion is the Temple, with all those chambers and courts, all its array, and Jerusalem, the entire city within the wall. The second expansion is the whole land of Israel, sanctified in holiness. The third expansion is all the rest of the earth, the habitation of other peoples; and the ocean surrounds all.

"As has been established, this mystery is the colors of the eye, surrounding that central point of the eye, which is

the vision of the whole eye—resembling the central point that we mentioned, which is the vision of all, site of the Holy of Holies, the ark, and the purging cover, vision of all. Thus, that point is vision of the whole world. Therefore it is written: *Beautiful in loftiness, joy of all the earth, Mount Zion* (Psalms 48:3). *Beautiful*—that vision is beautiful, joy of all. נוף (*Nof*), *loftiness*—נופא (*nofa*), top, of the tree, beauty of all.[32]

"Come and see: Beauty of the world and vision of the world were not seen in the world until the Dwelling was built and erected. From that moment, vision of all was seen in the world and the world was perfected. And they journeyed with that Dwelling until they reached this point: *beautiful in loftiness*, joy of all. Once they arrived there, the ark opened, saying, *This is My resting place forever; here will I dwell*, [*for I desired it*] (Psalms 132:14)."[33]

Rabbi Yose said, "This verse was uttered by Assembly of Israel when the Temple was built and the ark entered its place."[34]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "The blessed Holy One utters it, referring to Assembly of Israel when Israel performs His will. For then the blessed Holy One sits upon His Throne of Glory and has compassion on the world, and love for all prevails; then He says, *This is My resting place forever; here will I dwell*, [*for I desired it*].[35]

"Come and see: When all those artisans began to work, the very work they began was completed on its own; they began, and it completed the work all by itself. How do we know? As is written: *All the work of the Dwelling of the Tent of Meeting was completed* (Exodus 39:32). Similarly, *The heavens and the earth were completed* (Genesis 2:1). Now, you might say, '*God completed on the seventh day* [*His work that He had made*] (ibid., 2).' Certainly so! For even though all the works of the world were completed one by one, the whole world was not fulfilled in its existence until the seventh day arrived. Once it did arrive, all the works were

consummated, and thereby the blessed Holy One completed the world, as is written: *God completed* ביום השביעי (*ba-yom ha-shevi'i*), *by the seventh day, His work that He had made*—by this all His work that He had made was fulfilled in existence; thus, *God completed by the seventh day*.[36]

"When the Temple was built, all the work that was done was done on its own. The artisans began, and the work showed them what to do—it was traced before them and completed by itself. This has already been established, as is written: *The House, in its being built* (1 Kings 6:7)—it is not written *The House, when they built it*, but rather *in its being built. Was built of stone dressed at the quarry* (ibid.)—it is not written *they built it*, but rather *was built*, by itself it *was built*. And so with all work that is holy: it is completed by itself.[37] [223a]

"*Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur* (Exodus 38:22). We have learned that the Holy Spirit proclaimed this verse for him before the eyes of Israel: *Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur from the tribe of Judah made all that YHVH had commanded Moses*.

"*And with him was Oholiab* (Exodus 38:23). Why *and with him*? Well, we have learned that Oholiab did not perform the work by himself, but rather with Bezalel; with him he made whatever he made, as is written: *and with him*—*with him* and not by himself. From here we learn that the left is always included in the right. Therefore it is written: *And I, here, I have set with him Oholiab* (Exodus 31:6)—one, right; the other, left."[38]

These are the reckonings of the Dwelling, the Dwelling of Testimony, that were reckoned by the word of Moses… (Exodus 38:21). Rabbi Yeisa said, "Once all the wise men had made the Dwelling, an account had to be rendered of all that had been done and all the works that had been made within it. Why? Because as each account was rendered, that work was fulfilled and established in its

place. And all of Israel, just as they delighted in donating at first, so they delighted in that accounting, and then by that delight all the work was fulfilled. Therefore an account was essential here, since thereby the work was established.[39]

"*These* (Exodus 38:21)—it is not written *And these*, because this is an account that invalidates all accounts of the world; this one endures more than all of them, for by this, and by no other, the Dwelling was established."[40]

He opened, saying, "*He will be the faithfulness of your times, stronghold of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge; the awe of YHVH is his treasure* (Isaiah 33:6). This verse has been established by the Companions; but we have learned: Every person who engages in Torah in this world, and succeeds in setting *times* for her, must do so in *faithfulness*—directing his intention to the blessed Holy One, intending for the sake of Heaven, since *faithfulness* is intended for this.[41]

"*Stronghold of salvation*—including Compassion with Judgment.[42]

"*Wisdom and knowledge*—for these two settle one upon the other, this one concealed and hidden, to settle upon the other.[43]

"*The awe of YHVH is his treasure—treasure* of all these, for this one receives all those streams and She becomes a treasury for them all. And when all those hidden treasures issue from Her, She releases them all by accounting. How do we know? As is written: *Your eyes are pools* בחשבון (*be-ḥeshbon*), *in Heshbon* (Song of Songs 7:5)—*be-ḥeshbon*, by account, surely She acts: releasing those pools of water, carefully releasing all by accounting.[44]

"So She is called *faithfulness*; in all aspects She is called *faithfulness*, as we have established. Now, if faithfulness must be demonstrated here, how much more so in other, worldly matters! Therefore the blessed Holy One informed all of Israel about the mystery of their faithfulness in all that they did, and all has been said."[45]

Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Yitsḥak were traveling on the road. Rabbi Yose said, “Surely the blessed Holy One wanted Bezalel to perform the work of the Dwelling more than all the rest of Israel. Why?”

He replied, “The name proves decisive, as has been established; for the blessed Holy One placed names on earth, as is written: *who has brought* שַׁמּוֹת (*shammot*), *desolation, on earth* (Psalms 46:9)—שמהן (*shemahan*), names, the blessed Holy One has placed on earth, with which people may be adorned and with which they may perform action in the world.”[46]

He said to him, “There is a mystery here. Judah was of the left side, and afterward he cleaved to the right; so in this aspect was the Dwelling made: beginning from the left side and cleaving to the right and later merging with one another, becoming entirely right. Similarly, Torah: beginning from the left and cleaving to the right and merging with one another, becoming entirely right.[47]

“Reuben began from the right and deviated to the left, and those other tribes of the left journeyed with him, for he began from the right and strayed to the left. Judah began from the left and turned to the right; he began from the left because he comes from the left side, and he cleaved to the right. Consequently, Bezalel made the Dwelling, being prepared for this. As has been established, the blessed Holy One delighted in him and selected him from among all [223b] for this work, and gave him wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, as has been established, because he already possessed intelligence of heart, as is written: *In the heart of all who are wise-hearted I have set wisdom* (Exodus 31:6). For the blessed Holy One gives wisdom only to one who has wisdom, as the Companions have established and as has been said. Similarly, with Bezalel.”[48]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “Bezalel’s name proved decisive for him, and he was called so by virtue of his wisdom. Mystery of the word is בצל אל (*be-tsel El*), in the shadow of God.”[49]

He opened, saying, “*Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the young men. In his shade I delighted to sit*, [*and his fruit is sweet to my mouth*] (Song of Songs 2:3). בצלו (*Be-tsillo*), *in his shade*—corresponding to בצלאל (*Betsal’el*), Bezalel, who arranged and made the Dwelling, as is written: *I delighted to sit*, for the Dwelling is delightful to sit in, giving delight to Assembly of Israel, who sits in this shade. *Be-tsillo, in his shade*—as we have established, which is Bezalel. This is the one who produces good fruit in the world, as is written: *From Me your fruit appears* (Hosea 14:9). Who is fruit? Souls of the righteous, who are the fruit of the works of the blessed Holy One. For that river issuing from Eden gushes and casts souls into the world, and they are the fruit of the blessed Holy One; thus, *His fruit* [*is sweet to my mouth*]. This accords with what we have said.[50]

“בצלו (*Be-tsillo*), *in his shade*—בצלאל (*Betsal’el*), Bezalel, who embodied perfection of the Dwelling. Thus, *Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur* (Exodus 38:22). *Son of* אורי (*Uri*)—light of the sun coming forth; *son of Uri*, the right. *Son of* חור (*Ḥur*)—the left; son of *Ḥur*, son of חורי (*ḥori*), heat [of anger]. So, through him, Judgment was fulfilled for the blessed Holy One in the incident of the Golden Calf.[51]

“*All the gold that was fashioned* (Exodus 38:24)—already *fashioned* from the moment that Israel gave it, already *fashioned* and prepared previously.

“*In all the work of the sanctuary* (ibid.)—all that gold was fashioned and arranged *in all the work of the sanctuary*. Why? Because in every single rung gold was arranged, for there is no wholeness except Compassion and Judgment. So gold had to go into *all the work of the sanctuary*; in all the work called ‘sanctified’ there was *gold*—gold in everything.”[52]

Rabbi Abba, Rabbi Yose, and Rabbi Ḥizkiyah were sitting and delving into Torah. Rabbi Ḥizkiyah said to Rabbi Abba,

“We see that the blessed Holy One desires Judgment in everything, so that one mingles with the other, and yet He postpones Judgment on the wicked of the world. If He delights in Judgment, why does He withdraw it from the wicked?”[53]

He replied, “Many mountains have been uprooted by this matter. But the Holy Lamp has revealed several things about this. Come and see: The Judgment in which the blessed Holy One delights is clear Judgment, Judgment that arouses love and joy. But the wicked, when in the world, are entirely a judgment of filth, entirely a judgment in which the blessed Holy One takes no pleasure at all. So He does not wish to mingle holy Judgment with impure judgment—and eventually [the wicked one] is annihilated on his own and deprived of the world that is coming. That judgment of filth within him eliminates him from the world.”[54]

He opened, saying, “*When the wicked spring up like grass*, [*and all the workers of iniquity flourish—to be destroyed forever*] (Psalms 92:8). This verse has been established, but come and see! *When the wicked spring up like grass*—when withered grass in parched soil springs up; when drenched with water, it flourishes, and that dryness blooms. Or like a felled tree that blossoms, sprouting only shoots on either side of its upright branches; but the tree never grows like the tree it was before. And all this, *to be destroyed forever*—to be torn from their roots, from all.[55]

“Furthermore, there is another mystery here, in that the blessed Holy One delays His wrath against the wicked in this world, for this world is the portion of the Other Side, while the world that is coming is the side of holiness and the portion of the righteous—to be adorned with the crown of their Lord’s glory. These two sides stand confronting one another: one [224a] the side of holiness, the other the side of impurity. One exists for the righteous, the other for the wicked, contrasting entirely with one another. Happy are

the righteous, who have no share in this world but rather in the world that is coming![56]

"Come and see: All has been arranged and revealed before the blessed Holy One. Although Balak and Balaam did not intend what they did for the blessed Holy One, all is arranged before Him, and He did not diminish their reward at all in this world. At that time they dominated Israel, for their offering caused twenty-four thousand to pass away from Israel, besides all those who were slain, as is written: *Each of you kill his men who cling to Baal Peor*, and it is written: *Take all the leaders of the people and impale them to YHVH, facing the sun* (Numbers 25: 5, 4). And until now that offering still loomed to exact retribution from Israel. Seven altars, equivalent to forty-two."[57]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Come and see: Those forty-two offerings were brought by Balak and Balaam, who diverted them from the Other Side toward the blessed Holy One; so that offering remained looming, to be seized from Israel by the Other Side, called Curse. Until now, he had not collected it from them. This is the mystery of *He turned behind him and saw them* (2 Kings 2:24). *He turned behind him*—behind *Shekhinah*, for the Other Side stands behind. *And saw them*—the Other Side looked at them and saw that they deserved to be punished. Therefore, *he cursed them in the name of YHVH* (ibid.). *In the name of YHVH*—to release that *name of YHVH* from this debt, from the debt of that offering brought to Him by that side. All is arranged before the blessed Holy One, and nothing is lost. Similarly, all has been arranged before the blessed Holy One, whether for good or for evil.[58]

"It was David who fled from Saul, thereby causing all the priests of Nob to perish; not one of them survived except for Abiathar, who fled. And this inflicted many evils upon Israel: Saul and his sons died, and many thousands and myriads in Israel fell. Even so, that sin was dangling over David to collect its due, until all David's descendants

perished in one day; none of them survived except for Joash who was stolen away, just as no one survived of Ahimelech except for Abiathar. And until now that sin was dangling to exact retribution on Nob for that sin of Nob, as is written: *Yet this day at Nob to stand…* (Isaiah 10:32), as has been established.[59]

"Similarly, *All the gold* הנשוי (*he-asui*), *that was prepared, for the work* (Exodus 38:24). What does *he-asui* mean? Here the blessed Holy One foresaw that Israel would give gold for the calf, so He prepared this gold for them in advance as a remedy. For this preceded that gold, since all the gold they possessed they gave as an elevation offering for the Dwelling. Would you ever imagine that when they made the calf they had gold and yet tore their ears to obtain gold, as is written: *All the people tore off the golden rings that were on their ears* (Exodus 32:3)? Thus, the gold of the elevation offering.[60]

"So, [*Bezalel*] *son of Uri son of Hur from the tribe of Judah*—from the aspect of *Malkhuta* (Kingdom)—*made all that YHVH had commanded Moses* (Exodus 38:22). For all the artistry of the Dwelling was prepared by him, by his hand. Bezalel performed the artistry, and afterward Moses arranged everything. Moses and Bezalel were as one, Moses above and Bezalel beneath him—consummation of the body like the body.[61]

"Alternatively, Bezalel and Oholiab, as has been established: one right and the other left, and all is one. Thus, *Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur from the tribe of Judah…. And with him was Oholiab son of Ahisamach from the tribe of Dan* (Exodus 38:22–23)."[62]

All the gold that was fashioned for the work, in all the work of the sanctuary—the gold of the elevation offering (Exodus 38:24). Rabbi Yose opened with a verse about Elisha, as is written: *"From there he went up to Bethel, and as he was going up the road, little boys came out of the city and*

jeered at him, saying, 'Go away, baldhead! Go away, baldhead!' (2 Kings 2:23). נערים קטנים (*Ne'arim qetannim*), *little boys*, as has been established: they were מנוערים (*meno'arim*), empty, of all words of Torah and commandments of Torah. *Little*—[224b] of little faith; guilty in this world and guilty in the world that is coming.[63]

"*Came out of the city*—they left the mystery of faith. Here is written *came out of the city*, and there is written *I will not enter the city* (Hosea 11:9).[64]

"*He turned back and saw them* (2 Kings 2:24). *He turned back*—looking back to see whether they would turn back in repentance or not.[65]

"*And saw them*. What does this mean? He saw that no proper seed was destined to issue from them, as has been established. *And saw them*—as has already been established: that they were formed on the eve of Yom Kippur. Immediately, *he cursed them in the name of YHVH* (2 Kings 2:24).[66]

"There is a mystery in this verse: ויפן (*Va-yiphen*), *He turned, behind him* (2 Kings 2:24)—looking at them to see whether he would be punished for their sake, ואתפני (*ve-itpenei*), and he was freed, from this. As is said: ויפן אהרן (*Va-yiphen Aharon*), *Aaron turned* (Numbers 12:10), דאתפני (*de-itpenei*), for he was freed, from his scaly skin disease; here too, *itpenei*, he was freed, from punishment.[67]

"*And saw them*—that they were poised to later perpetrate much evil in Israel.

"*He turned behind him*—as is said: *His wife looked behind him* (Genesis 19:26). What does *behind him* mean? Behind *Shekhinah*. Here too, *He turned behind him*—he gazed behind *Shekhinah* and saw that all of them had been conceived by their mothers on the night presiding over the atonement of the sins of Israel. Immediately, *he cursed them in the name of YHVH*.[68]

"*Then two bears came out of the woods* (2 Kings 2:24). שתים דובים (*Shettayim dubbim*), *two bears*. The verse should read

שנים דובים (*shenayim dubbim*), *two bears*; why *shettayim dubbim*? They were females with their cubs.[69]

"*And mangled forty-two of the children* (2 Kings 2:24)—as has been established, corresponding to the offerings of Balak.[70]

"*The gold of the elevation offering* (Exodus 38:24). Why is it called *the gold of the elevation offering*, whereas silver is not called *of the elevation offering*? Well, there are two that are called so: *the gold of the elevation offering* and *the bronze of the elevation offering* (ibid., 29). These are called so because of rising above, for there is something similar below, whose gold does not resemble that of elevation. Always *elevation* means raising, not lowering.[71]

"That is the mystery of this counting, for all these rungs and chariots participate in this elevation, and it is the gold of elevation. This gold—the further it extends downward, the more its appearance, quality, and brilliance are obscured. When elevated, it is fine gold in the mystery of its brilliance, whereas all that below is dross of gold and its smelting.[72]

"*And the silver reckoned from the community* (Exodus 38:25)—because as it extends downward, it remains good. Even though not in elevation, it is entirely good; whereas gold—the further it extends downward, the worse it becomes. One extends positively, the other negatively. Therefore, one must be elevated and raised, while the other must spread below and in all directions, sustaining all in goodness."[73]

He opened, saying, "*For a sun and shield is YHVH Elohim; grace and glory YHVH bestows; He does not withhold goodness from those who walk blameless* (Psalms 84:12). *For a sun*—the blessed Holy One. *And shield*—the blessed Holy One. *Sun*—mystery of the Holy Name *YHVH*, for here all rungs attain tranquility. *And shield*—mystery of the Holy Name called *Elohim*, and this is the mystery written *I am your*

shield (Genesis 15:1). *Sun and shield*—mystery of the complete name.[74]

"*Grace and glory YHVH bestows*—so that all becomes one mystery.[75]

"*He does not withhold goodness from those who walk blameless*—this mystery is that which is written: *The light of the wicked is withheld* (Job 38:15). This is the primordial light, hidden away and concealed by the blessed Holy One, as has been established. From the wicked He hid and withheld it in this world and in the world that is coming. But as for the righteous, what is written? *He does not withhold goodness from those who walk blameless*—the primordial light, of which is written *God saw the light, that it was good* (Genesis 1:4).[76]

"Therefore this does not need to rise or be elevated, but rather to spread and be revealed—not to rise like that other one, which is of the left. So that one is called *elevation offering*, and not this one. Thus, *And the silver reckoned from the community was a hundred talents*... (Exodus 38:25).[77]

"Come and see: The right side endures constantly, sustaining the world, shining [225a] and blessing. Therefore the priest, who is of the right side, is always ready to bless the people. For from the right side come all blessings of the world, and the priest receives first, so he is appointed to bless above and below.[78]

"Come and see: When the priest spreads his hands to bless the people, *Shekhinah* comes and settles upon him and fills his hands. He raises the right hand above the left, so as to elevate the Right to overpower the Left. Then all the rungs in which he spreads his hands are blessed by the source of all. Who is the source of the well? Righteous One. The source of all is the World that is Coming, who is the supernal source from which all faces shine; for it is the spring and source of all, from which all lamps shine and are kindled.[79]

“Similarly, from the source and spring of the well, all lamps below are illumined and filled with light. This one corresponds to that one. Thus, when the priest spreads his hands and begins to bless the people, blessings flow from the supernal source, kindling lamps, and all faces shine, and Assembly of Israel is adorned with sublime crowns, and all those blessings stream, drawn from above to below.[80]

“Come and see: Moses commanded and Bezalel performed, so that all would be in the mystery of body and consummation of body—which is sign of the holy covenant—to increase love and the bond of union in the Dwelling. All was done in mystery of the right. So, wherever the right side appears, the evil eye has no power. Thus, *And the silver reckoned from the community* (Exodus 38:25)—for that silver came from the right side, so all was counted precisely.”[81]

Rabbi Yitsḥak asked Rabbi Shim’on, “It has been established that blessing does not dwell in anything measured or based on measurement or counting. So here, regarding the Dwelling, why was everything counted?”[82]

He replied, “This has already been discussed. But wherever the side of holiness settles, if that counting proceeds from this side, blessing settles there continuously, never departing. How do we know this? From the tithe. Since counting comes for the sake of holiness, blessing appears there. All the more so, the Dwelling, which is holiness and derives from the side of holiness.[83]

“But as for other things of the world, not deriving from the side of holiness, blessing does not settle upon them when they are counted. For the Other Side, who is the evil eye, can dominate it; and once it dominates, blessing vanishes from that object, since it is not of the side of holiness.

“Blessings are always added to measurement and counting of holiness. Therefore, *And the silver reckoned*

from the community (Exodus 38:25)—*reckoned from the community*, indeed! They did not fear the evil eye nor this entire count, and blessings from above spread over all.[84]

"Come and see: The evil eye has no power over the seed of Joseph, since he comes from the right side, and therefore the Dwelling was made by Bezalel, who dwells in the mystery of Joseph, mystery of holy Covenant. Thus, *And the silver reckoned from the community*. That counting enumerates grand empowered rungs, linked to the right side, as is written: *a hundred talents*... (Exodus 38:25)."[85]

Rabbi Abba, Rabbi Aḥa, and Rabbi Yose were traveling from Tiberias to Sepphoris. As they were going along, they saw Rabbi El'azar approaching, accompanied by Rabbi Ḥiyya. Rabbi Abba said, "Surely, we will join with *Shekhinah*!"[86]

They waited for them to arrive. As soon as they did, Rabbi El'azar said, "It is surely written: *The eyes of YHVH are upon the righteous, and His ears to their outcry* (Psalms 34:16). This verse—if it refers to the blessed Holy One's providence over them, benefiting them in this world, well, we see many righteous who cannot attain even as much food as ravens of the field! [225b] So, what does this mean: *The eyes of YHVH are upon the righteous*?

"But there is a mystery here. Come and see: All creatures of the world are known above, either to one side or to the other. Those of the side of holiness are known to it above, and its providence is over them. Those of the impure side are known to it, and its supervision is over them. Wherever providence of the side of holiness prevails, the Other Side does not oversee nor ever approach, nor can it thrust one away at all, whatever it does. Thus, *The eyes of YHVH are upon the righteous*—for the Other Side is powerless over him. And now, the help of heaven is here and all providence from above, and the Other Side and anything evil are powerless over you!"[87]

Rabbi Abba said, “We have already learned that wherever the side of holiness settles, even though it is susceptible to calculation, blessings are not withheld.”[88]

Rabbi El’azar said, “Certainly so!”

He said to him, “Look, Israel is holiness and comes from the side of holiness, as is written: *Holy is Israel to* YHVH (Jeremiah 2:3), and it is written: *You shall be holy, for I* YHVH *am holy* (Leviticus 20:26). Why, then, when David took a census of Israel, did a plague rage among the people, as is written: YHVH *sent a plague against Israel from morning until the fixed time* (2 Samuel 24:15)?”[89]

He replied, “Because he did not take a ransom from them, as is written: *Every man shall give ransom for his life to* YHVH *when they are counted, that there shall be no plague among them when they are counted* (Exodus 30:12). For holiness that is revealed must give a holy ransom, and that holy ransom was not taken from them.[90]

“Come and see: Israel is holiness, not susceptible to calculation themselves, and so a ransom must be taken from them; that ransom is susceptible to calculation, while they are not. Why? Because Holiness is supernal mystery of all rungs. Just as that holiness transcends all, and has another holiness outside, below—standing beneath it and susceptible to calculation and numbering—so too, Israel is holiness, as is written: *Holy is Israel to* YHVH (Jeremiah 2:3), and they give another holiness, their ransom, which is susceptible to calculation. This mystery is: Israel is a tree standing within; another ransom stands outside and is counted up. One shields the other.”[91]

They went on. Rabbi El’azar opened, saying, “*The number of the Children of Israel will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or counted*… (Hosea 2:1). What does this mean: *like the sand of the sea*? There are two nuances here. *Like the sand of the sea*—when rolling waves of the sea rise in rage, heaving to flood the world; when they reach and see the sand of the shore, they are

immediately broken, receding and subsiding, unable to prevail. Similarly, Israel is sand of the sea, and when those waves of the sea—those masters of rage, masters of harsh judgment—seek to dominate and inundate the world, they see Israel bound to the blessed Holy One and they recede, broken before them, and cannot prevail in the world.[92]

"Another nuance: Sand of the sea cannot be counted; so too, Israel cannot be counted and are not susceptible to calculation—neither to measurement nor calculation, as is written: *which cannot be measured or counted*.

"Come and see: There is concealed, hidden measurement, and there is counting abiding in hiddenness, concealed and hidden. One is susceptible to measurement, the other susceptible to counting. This is mystery and vitality of all, above and below, for that measurement—the basis of its mystery is never known; nor is the basis of the mystery of that counting. This is the mystery of faith of all.[93]

"Israel below is not susceptible to calculation except by another mode—of ransom, which is susceptible. Therefore, when Israel enters [226a] the realm of counting, a ransom is taken from them, as has been said. Thus, in the days of David, when he took a census of Israel and did not take a ransom from them, wrath prevailed, and many legions and camps of Israel perished. So, in the construction of the Dwelling it is written: *Whosoever undergoes the reckoning* [*from twenty years old and above shall give YHVH's offering*] (Exodus 30:14); *And the silver reckoned from the community* [*was a hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels by the sanctuary shekel. A beqa to the head, half a shekel by the sanctuary shekel*] *for each who underwent the reckoning* (ibid. 38:25–26). All was consecrated for the construction of the Dwelling. As they have established, *talents* belong to one count, *shekels* to another. For there are high entities amounting to a high count, and others amounting to another—one higher and one lower. Thus, *The hundred talents of silver were for*

casting the sockets of the sanctuary and the sockets of the curtain… (ibid., 27)—these are sockets, as has been established."[94]

He opened, saying, "*A song of ascents. Of Solomon. Unless YHVH builds the house, its builders labor in vain*… (Psalms 127:1). This verse was uttered by King Solomon when he was building the Temple. As he started to build, he saw that the work took shape in their hands and was formed by itself. Then he began to proclaim, *Unless YHVH builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless YHVH watches over the city, the watchman looks out in vain*—as has been established.[95]

"Come and see! *Unless YHVH builds the house*—corresponding to the mystery that is written: *In the beginning God created* (Genesis 1:1), for the blessed Holy One created and arranged this world with everything it needed, for it is *the house*.[96]

"*Its builders labor in vain*—mystery of those rivers all flowing forth and entering this *house*, furnishing it with whatever it needs. Although they all come to arrange and enhance it, surely *unless YHVH*—mystery of the upper world—establishes and builds the house properly, those builders are worthless. The essence is really what He makes and prepares.[97]

"*Unless YHVH watches over the city*—as is said: *The eyes of YHVH your God are perpetually upon her from the year's beginning* [*to the year's end*] (Deuteronomy 11:12), as has been established. By this watchfulness, She is protected on all sides.[98]

"Although it is written *Behold, the bed of Solomon! Sixty warriors surrounding her*… (Song of Songs 3:7), all guarding Her—why do they guard Her? On account of what is written: *because of terror in the night* (ibid., 8)—the terror of Hell, which confronts Her, to thrust Her away. Consequently, they all surround Her.[99]

“[…] although all exist within radiance of Thought unknown. Then this radiance of Thought unknown strikes the radiance of the curtain, and they shine as one, forming nine palaces of palaces—neither lights nor spirits nor souls; no one can fathom them. The desire of all nine lights, all existing in Thought—the latter numerically one of them—is to pursue them while existing in Thought, but they remain unapprehended, unknown. These fathom neither Will nor supernal Thought, grasping yet not grasping. In these abide all mysteries of faith, and all those lights from mystery of Thought downward are called *Ein Sof*, Endless. Until here lights extend and do not extend and are unknown. No will here, no thought.[100]

“When Thought illumines—from whom is unknown—it is clothed and enveloped in *Binah*, Understanding, illumining what it illumines, one entering the other, till all merge as one, as has been established.[101]

“Through the mystery of the offering, as it ascends, all are bound to each other, illumining one another. Then all engage in ascent, and Thought is crowned in *Ein Sof*. The radiance from which supernal Thought shines is called *Ayin*, Nothingness.[102]

“Once it shines and powers expand from it, Thought is concealed, treasured away, unknown. From there, expansion spreads in all directions, and one expansion spreading from it is mystery of the upper world. This is susceptible to questioning, and is the supernal utterance. As has been established, it is called מי (*mi*), Who, as is written: *Lift your eyes on high and see: Who created these?* (Isaiah 40:26)—the question that *created these*.[103]

“Afterward it expands and becomes ים (*yam*), Sea, end of all rungs, who is below; and from there it begins building below. All is made exactly on the pattern [226b] above, one corresponding to the other, matching one another.[104]

“Thus, protection of all, above and below, consists in this expansion of Thought, who is the upper world. This is the

meaning of *Unless YHVH watches over the city, the watchman looks out in vain* (Psalms 127:1)—*the watchman* of whom is written *watchman of Israel* (ibid. 121:4), for protection depends not on Him but on the upper world.[105]

"Come and see the violet of the Dwelling! All abides in supernal mystery, as has been established. Violet and purple—to be interwoven with one another. As has been said, in the mystery of what is written: *For YHVH your God is a consuming fire* (Deuteronomy 4:24); as has been said, there is a fire consuming fire, consuming and annihilating it, for there is fire fiercer than fire. As has been said, whoever wishes to know the wisdom of holy unification [should gaze at the flame ascending from a burning coal or from a candle]...."[106]

And from the one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels he made hooks for the pillars and overlaid their tops and banded them (Exodus 38:28). Come and see: We have learned that Moses forgot about those shekels and did not know what became of them, until a voice issued, proclaiming: *And from the one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels he made hooks for the pillars.*[107]

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah opened, "*While the king was on his couch, my spikenard yielded its fragrance* (Song of Songs 1:12). This verse has been discussed; however, *While the king*—the blessed Holy One, when He gave the Torah to Israel and came to Sinai, with numerous chariots accompanying Him, all holy, along with all supernal sanctities of holiness of Torah. And Torah was given in fiery flashes, all in the aspect of fire, written in white fire upon black fire, letters flying and rising through the air.[108]

"The first letter of Torah divided into 775 in all directions, all visible in the air of the sky within the letter וו (*vav*)—ו (*vav*) on this side, ו (*vav*) on that side, and so on all sides.[109]

“These *vavs* stood on pillars, and those pillars stood miraculously, with all those *vavs* upon them. For the mystery of Torah is based on *vav*, and those *vavs*, mystery of Torah, are all on those pillars, which are mysteries through which prophets emerge. Their mystery is on every side, and on those pillars stand those *vavs*.[110]

“Supreme *vav* is mystery of the audible voice, mystery in which Torah exists, for Torah issues from that inner voice called *mighty voice*. This is *mighty voice*, mystery of Torah, of which is written *a mighty voice, unceasing* (Deuteronomy 5:19).[111]

“Come and see: This *mighty voice* is essence of all and mystery of the supernal Holy Name. Therefore it has been established that a person must not greet his friend before offering his prayer. This mystery has been established based on what is written: *One who blesses his fellow in a mighty voice, rising early in the morning, shall have it reckoned to him as a curse* (Proverbs 27:14). It is not forbidden unless he blesses him in the mystery of *a mighty voice*, essence of the Holy Name.[112]

“Thus, mystery of Torah issues from that *mighty voice*, and this is *king* (Song of Songs 1:12).[113]

“*On his couch* (ibid.)—the revelation at Mount Sinai, as has been established.[114]

“*My spikenard yielded* [227a] *its fragrance* (ibid.)—Assembly of Israel, for Israel said, *All that YHVH has spoken we will do and we will heed* (Exodus 24:7).[115]

“*The king* (Song of Songs 1:12)—Supreme King, as has been established.[116]

“Come and see: When the blessed Holy One brought a flood upon the world to destroy everything, He said to Noah, ‘You must hide away and not let yourself be seen by the Destroyer, so that he will not overpower you.’ For there was no one to protect him. Once a sacrifice was offered by Noah, the world became fragrant—though not so fragrant, until Israel stood at Mount Sinai. Once they stood at Sinai,

the world became fully fragrant and the Destroyer was nowhere to be found.[117]

"At that time, the blessed Holy One was about to eliminate that Destroyer from the world, but Israel sinned after just a few days, making the calf. Then, what is written? *The Children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments from Mount Horeb on* (Exodus 33:6). *Their ornaments* were mysteries of the Holy Name with which the blessed Holy One had adorned them and which were now taken from them. Then the Destroyer regained power over the world, as before when he ruled the world and executed judgment."[118]

Rabbi Yose said, "In the days of the Flood, who placed the Destroyer there? For it was simply water overwhelming.

"Come and see: There is not a single judgment in the world, nor is the world ever smitten with judgment, without that Destroyer moving within those judgments executed upon the world. Here too, there was a flood, the Destroyer surging through the flood and named after it. So the blessed Holy One told Noah to hide himself and not be seen in the world, as has been established."[119]

Come and see: Rabbi Yose said, "The world remained unsettled and earth did not escape the slime [of the serpent until Israel stood at Mount Sinai, grasping the Tree of Life…]."[120]

Come and see: Rabbi El'azar said, "*And from the one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels he made* וים (*vavim*), *hooks, for the pillars* (Exodus 38:28). Why *vavim, hooks*? Well, they were shaped like a ו (*vav*). Their tops were overlaid with gold; they themselves were made of silver, and their tops overlaid with gold. For every *vav* appears on the side of Compassion, and all of them were known above by reckoning. Since they derived from the side of Compassion, they were called *vavim*, with all the rest suspended from them. Every single *vav* consists of gold and silver together, and therefore they are all called *vavim* of

those *pillars*. Who are *pillars*? As is said: *the two pillars…* (1 Kings 7:41). For these stood outside the body, below."[121]

Rabbi Yitsḥak said, "I do not know whether this is holy workmanship or secular, for it is written: *And from the one thousand* (Exodus 38:28). Here is written *the one thousand*, and there is written *The one thousand is yours, Solomon* (Song of Songs 8:12); just as in the latter, *the one thousand* is secular, so it is here."[122]

He replied, "Not so! For if it were secular, *vavim*, *hooks*, would not have been made from them. Furthermore, there it is written *the one thousand* (Song of Songs 8:12) and no more, whereas here is written *the one thousand seven hundred seventy-five* (Exodus 38:28). *The one thousand* are secular, as is written: *The one thousand is yours, Solomon*. This is secular, for everything secular is not on the side of holiness at all, but is from the other, impure side. Thus, *Havdalah* (differentiation) between holy and secular, for we must separate between holy and secular. The Scriptural mystery is as follows: *to divide between the holy and the profane, between the impure and the pure* (Leviticus 10:10).[123]

"Yet even so, although holy is separate from secular, the latter has one portion of holiness [227b] from the left side, as is written: *The one thousand is yours, Solomon*, which are one thousand secular days, namely days of exile. As there are a thousand days of holiness, so too there are a thousand days of the Other Side. So, those days of exile; and thus the Companions have educed that the days of exile lasted a thousand years—one thousand years of exile. So there is *one thousand*, and then there is *one thousand*! As for these thousand years of exile—although Israel may remain in exile longer, they are persisting in these thousand years, namely, the thousand days that we have mentioned. Thus, it has been established that every mention of *Solomon* in Song of Songs is holy except for this one, which is secular. But *the one thousand* (Exodus 38:28) here is holy,

and everything made from it is holy; so, *He made hooks for the pillars* (ibid.).[124]

"Come and see: We have said that every ו (*vav*) is in mystery of Compassion, and wherever *vav* appears in the Holy Name it signifies Compassion. For example, ויהוה (*Va-YHVH*), *And YHVH, rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah* [*brimstone and fire*] (Genesis 19:24); *Va-YHVH, And YHVH, said to Abram* (ibid. 13:14)—Compassion and Judgment as one. Why is it different with the Flood, where it is written everywhere *Elohim*? Why isn't it written *And YHVH*? Well, we have learned: 'Everywhere *And YHVH* indicates "He and His Court"; *Elohim*, by itself, means Judgment alone.' Now, at Sodom judgment was executed, yet not destroying the world, so He intermingled with Judgment; but in the Flood it destroyed the whole world and all those present in the world.[125]

"Now, you might say, 'What about Noah and those with him?' Well, he was hidden from sight, unseen. So, everything present in the world it destroyed. *And YHVH*—in the open, not destroying all. *Elohim*—one needs concealment and must beware, for it destroys all. So *Elohim* was alone.[126]

"The secret is: *YHVH sat at the Flood* (Psalms 29:10). What does *sat* mean? If the verse were not written, we could not say it: He *sat* alone, not accompanying Judgment. Here is written *sat*, and there is written *Alone he will sit* (Leviticus 13:46)—all alone.[127]

"I have learned a secret: The blessed Holy One—concealed and revealed. Revealed—Lower Court of Justice. Concealed—the place from which all blessings flow. Therefore blessings settle upon all things kept concealed, whereas everything revealed is occupied by that site of the Court, it being a site revealed. All within supernal mystery, corresponding above."[128]

"*While the king was on his couch* (Song of Songs 1:12)—in that delightful companionship of supernal Eden, as has

been established; by that concealed, hidden path, unknown, by which it is filled, then flowing in certain streams.[129]

"*My spikenard yielded its fragrance* (Song of Songs 1:12)—the last sea, which created the lower world, corresponding above; it emits a fine, sublime fragrance, enabling it to prevail and act, shining by supernal light.[130]

"Come and see: When this spikenard emits fragrance above, love is bound, and this nard ascends to unite above, and all the holy chariots emit fragrance to be adorned above. Those chariots are all called עלמות שיר (*alamot shir*), *maidens of song*, as is said: *Upon* *alamot shir* (Psalms 46:1), and they have established: What is *alamot shir*? Well, as is said: ועלמות (*va-alamot*), *and maidens, without number* (Song of Songs 6:8). What does this mean: *and maidens without number*? As is said: *Is there any number to His troops?* (Job 25:3). Since they are numberless, it is written *and maidens without number*.[131]

"ווים (*Vavim*), *hooks, for the pillars* (Exodus 38:28)—all male. All those ascending with anointing oil abide in mystery of the male, and only ו (*vav*) is called male, mystery of heaven, which is male. All those below are called female; so all those proceeding from the left side, from the female side, are assigned to sing, and they utter song constantly. Therefore it is written: *Upon maidens of song* (Psalms 46:1). All of them emerge in mystery of ה (*he*). *He* generates many forces according to their kind in mystery of ו (*vav*)—*vav*, mystery of the male, poised to provide sustenance to the female.[132]

"Thus, all those *vavim*, *hooks*, made by Bezalel, provided to settle upon the females. They emerge from mystery of *one thousand*, a complete count; *seven hundred*, a complete mystery; *five*, so too; *seventy*, all one mystery. So, from this mystery and this count *he made* *vavim*, *hooks* (Exodus 38:28)—all made in mystery of *vav* and in the shape of *vav*, all in supernal mystery."[133] [228a]

And the bronze of the elevation offering was seventy talents (Exodus 38:29). Rabbi Yehudah said, "All this descends below in the supernal image of mystery of faith. Similarly, the wicked Nebuchadnezzar made that statue."[134]

Rabbi Yose said, "He did not make it so; rather in his dream he saw it so—for in his dream he saw a head of gold and then silver and then bronze.[135]

"Now, you might say, 'Why not iron and clay?' Because they are not worthy to enter holiness, whereas these others entered. These three entered, and the mystery of the Dwelling is in this triad of metals—and otherwise four, for example: *violet, purple, crimson, and linen* (Exodus 26:31), and four rows of stones."[136]

Rabbi Yehudah said, "Some of them three, some of them four, some of them two; but every single array consists only of three.[137]

"Three arrays diverge on every side, in four directions of the world. Each and every array on every side includes three arrays, as we have established.[138]

"First array, to the east, is three arrays, which are nine, since each of those three comprises three arrays, consequently nine, with many thousands and myriads beneath them.[139]

"These nine arrays are all conducted by engraved letters, upon which each of them gazes, as has been established. So it is with every array, all of them moving by engraved letters, these above those, standing over those. When those letters soar through air of spirit, appointed over all, they all stir, as has been established.[140]

"One letter knocks from below, ascending, descending. Two letters soar above them, and this letter below ascends, from below above, joining them, becoming three letters, all corresponding to the letters י ה ו (*yod, he, vav*), three within the resplendent speculum. From these, three arrays diverge. Those letters are two; this letter ascending joins them, and they are three.[141]

“Come and see: Those two supernal letters ascending through the air merge with one another, Compassion with Judgment. So they are two, from the world above in mystery of male. The one ascending, joining them, is female, embraced by both of them. Just as female is embraced by two sides, right and left, joining them, so this letter is female and joins two other letters on two sides. These above, this below; all is one, male and female—though when the world was created those letters derived from the upper world, engendering all works below according to their pattern precisely. So, whoever knows them and is mindful of them is beloved above, beloved below.”[142]

Rabbi Shim’on said, “All these letters are male and female, merging as one in mystery of upper waters and lower waters. All is one, consummate unity. So, whoever knows them and is mindful of them—happy is he in this world, happy is he in the world that is coming, for this is the essence of perfect unity!”[143]

“Three, three, on this side and on that side, in single unity, in total perfection. All of them, mystery of supernal array, fittingly, corresponding above, for that array is three, three, in single mystery.[144]

“Second array, to the south, mystery of silver: three arrays on that side, each array three, totaling nine, as has been said. Letters divide in every direction, to all join as one, for there are letters in mystery of female and letters in mystery of male, all uniting as one, becoming one in mystery of the complete Holy Name. Accompanying them, appointed arrays, three, three, as has been said.[145]

“All issues from the array of supernal Patriarchs, according to the arrayal [228b] of letters of the Holy Name: י ה ו (*yod, he, vav*), as has been said. These arrays are all conducted by these well-known letters, by which they move. Countless forces and princes, all below, move and are conducted within this array.[146]

“Third array, to the north: three arrays on that side, and they are nine.[147]

“On three sides, three on each side, and they are nine. Those arrays on three sides, as has been said, twenty-seven, in mystery of letters that are twenty-seven. Although they are twenty-two, fullness of letters is twenty-seven. Consequently, as the letters are twenty-seven, the arrangement of these arrays is twenty-seven, three arrays on each side. Three on this side comprise nine; three on this side comprise nine; three on this side comprise nine—thus all of them total twenty-seven.[148]

“Mystery of these twenty-seven letters: nine letters in mystery of female, through which female joins those eighteen others through the mystery mentioned, all fittingly.[149]

“Come and see: Corresponding to high letters of the upper world, other letters below. High letters, large; low letters, small; all corresponding to one another. In all these mysteries, through mystery of male and female all is completely one; so all abides in supernal mystery.[150]

“The universe diffracts into forty-five hues of colored light. Seven disperse into seven abysses, each one striking its own abyss, stones gyrating. The light penetrates those stones, piercing them, and water issues from them, each one sinking within an abyss, covering both sides. Water flows through those holes, light penetrates, striking all four sides of the abyss. Each light whirls around its partner, converging as one, splitting the water. All seven seize seven abysses, delving their darkness, which mingles with them. Waters rise and fall, swirling amidst those lights. Light, darkness, and water blend as one, becoming invisible, darkened lights. Each strikes its partner, splaying into seventy-five abyssal channels, water streaming through. Every channel roars, abysses quake. As the roar sounds, each abyss calls to its partner: ‘Split your waters and I will

enter you,' as is written: *Abyss calls to abyss at the sound of Your channels* (Psalms 42:8).[151]

"Beneath these lie 380 sinews, some white, some black, some red, intertwining, turning into one color. These sinews interweave into seventeen, each one called a sinew web. Interwoven, they sink to the depths of the abysses. Beneath these lie two webs like iron and two others like copper. Upon them stand two thrones, one on the right and one on the left. All those webs join as one, and water pours down from the channels through the webs. Those two thrones—one is the throne of black expanse; the other, the throne of multicolored expanse. When those two thrones ascend, they ascend through the throne of black expanse; when they descend, they descend through the throne of multicolored expanse. These two thrones appear on the right and the left—of black expanse on the right, of multicolored expanse on the left. When they ascend through the throne of black expanse, the throne of the expanse on the left sinks and through it they descend. Spinning around one another, the thrones catch all those webs, drawing them into the depths of the lowest abyss. One throne rises above all the abysses, the other lies below them all, [229a] while in between these thrones all abysses swirl and all channels are inserted.[152]

"There are seventy-five channels: seven, highest of all; all the others connected to them. All are inserted in the wheels of the throne on this side and in the wheels of the throne on that side. Through them waters rise and fall. Falling, they penetrate the abysses, splitting them. Rising, they enter the holes in the stones, filling seven seas. Until here, seven colors of light in supernal mystery.

"Come and see: *The bronze of the elevation offering* (Exodus 38:29), which we mentioned, is bronze mountains, called *mountains of bronze* (Zechariah 6:1); and they are called *bronze sockets* (Exodus 26:37). These stand as gates in all those openings, surrounding all those who stand

within; for these are the gates standing at the openings, and they enter and emerge from the Palace.[153]

"From this bronze derive all the ministering vessels of the altar. These are vessels for the altar; for when souls approach to ascend the altar, these perform the service of the altar, all helping to officiate, and they are called 'vessels of the altar.' All of these and all those *pegs of the Dwelling* (Exodus 35:18) are called by name, ministering vessels to serve in the Sanctuary. Thus all of them stand as recognized chieftains, chariots, and spirits, every single one fittingly. In palaces of holiness, well known, they are all numbered.[154]

"Gold is linked to gold, silver to silver, bronze to bronze. These of bronze below draw power from bronze above, and so with all. All those colors intermingle, uniting, joining with one another.[155]

"*Golden clasps* (Exodus 36:13), to bind those curtains to one another; *bronze clasps* (ibid., 18), to bind the Dwelling. These corresponding to those, all like stars in the sky. As stars shining in the sky, so those clasps shine in the Dwelling, as we have established. Those clasps shine like stars standing out and sparkling; fifty of gold and fifty of bronze, shining upon one another.[156]

"Out of supernal light issues a spark, sparkling and shining in the speculum that does not shine, and that spark comprises all radiant colors and is called purple. When this purple strikes that dark color, another spark issues, not glowing, and they mingle with one another, becoming garments of holiness in which Michael the high priest is dressed. When he wears those garments of glory, he enters to minister in the Sanctuary, and without wearing these garments, he does not enter. Similarly, *Moses entered within the cloud and went up the mountain* (Exodus 24:18). We have learned that he was dressed in the cloud; once he was dressed in the cloud *he went up the mountain*, and until he was dressed in it he could not enter within.[157]

“Similarly, the high priest did not enter the Sanctuary until he was dressed in these garments, enabling him to enter. Since they issued from supernal mysteries and correspond to the pattern above, they are called בגדי שרד (*bigdei serad*), *residual garments* (Exodus 39:1), for they remained from those supernal garments; they were made of the residue of the light of supernal radiancies—of *violet and purple* (ibid.), colors of mystery of the Holy Name, called ‘the complete name,’ *YHVH Elohim*. This is the mystery of what the high priest wears to enter the Sanctuary. *Crimson* (ibid.)—the colors red and violet. *Purple*—comprising all those colors. And since he was dressed in garments of these colors, he entered within and was not thrust out.[158]

“Come and see: All was fashioned in mystery of faith, so that all corresponded to the supernal pattern. Thus it is written: *the residual garments to serve in the sanctuary* (Exodus 39:41). They are called *holy garments*, for they are only called *holy* when those colors are imbued in them, as is written: *They are holy garments* (Leviticus 16:4), [229b] and it is written: *Holy is Israel to YHVH, the first fruits of His harvest* (Jeremiah 2:3)—*Holy is Israel*, because in Israel all colors appear: priests, Levites, and Israel, who are colors to be displayed.[159]

“Come and see: The soul does not ascend to appear before the Holy King until she is worthy of being clothed in a supernal garment. Similarly, she does not descend until she is clothed in a garment of this world. Similarly with a holy angel above. Of the angels is written *He makes His angels spirits, His ministers flaming fire* (Psalms 104:4). When they carry out a mission in this world, they do not descend until they are clothed in a garment of this world. All is according to one’s destination; and we have established that the soul ascends only in a radiant garment.[160]

“Come and see: When Adam was in the Garden of Eden, he wore a garment on the supernal pattern, a garment of

celestial light. As soon as he was expelled from the Garden and needed fashions of this world, what is written? *YHVH Elohim made* כתנות עור (*kotnot or*), *coats of skin, for Adam and his wife, and He clothed them* (Genesis 3:21). Originally, they were כתנות אור (*kotnot or*), *garments of light*—of that supernal light that functioned in the Garden of Eden. For in the Garden a supernal radiant light functions; so as Adam entered, the blessed Holy One clothed him in a garment of that light, conducting him in. If he had not been clothed first in that light, he could not have entered there. As soon as he was expelled from there, he needed another garment, and so, *YHVH Elohim made coats of skin for Adam and his wife*. All as it should be. And here, similarly, *they made residual garments to serve in the sanctuary* (Exodus 39:1)—to enter the Sanctuary.[161]

"As has been established, the good deeds that a person performs in this world draw from the light of supernal radiance a garment, in which he will be arrayed in that world to appear before the Holy King. Clothed in that garment, he delights and gazes in the resplendent speculum, as is said: *to gaze upon the beauty of YHVH and to seek in His temple* (Psalms 27:4). Thus, the soul is clothed in two worlds, attaining total perfection, in this world below and in the world above. Of this is written *Surely the righteous will acclaim Your name, the upright will dwell in Your presence* (Psalms 140:14). *Surely the righteous will acclaim Your name*—in this world. *The upright will dwell in Your presence*—in that world."[162]

He made the ephod of gold (Exodus 39:2), as has been established.[163]

Rabbi Yose said, "The ephod and the breastpiece were as one. As has been established, in the place of existence all those twelve stones exist, all bearing the names of the Children of Israel—all twelve supernal boundaries in mystery of the tribes of Israel. This is the mystery written:

There tribes ascend, the tribes of Yah, a testimony to Israel, to praise the name of YHVH (Psalms 122:4). *There tribes ascend*—those twelve supernal tribes above, who are *tribes of Yah*, for this name is *a testimony to Israel*."[164]

Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "*Tribes* is written twice. *There tribes ascend*—tribes below. *The tribes of Yah*—tribes above. *A testimony to Israel*—mystery of the supernal Holy Name, called *testimony*, as is said: *My testimony that I will teach them* (Psalms 132:12). Those twelve supernal holy tribes are twelve holy stones, and so they exist below corresponding to the pattern above, and all those names of the twelve tribes are engraved on those stones and carried by the high priest.[165]

"Come and see: When Jacob was journeying to Haran, what is written? *He took of the stones of the place and put them at his head* (Genesis 28:11). These are twelve holy stones, and they all became one stone, as is written: *This stone that I set as a pillar* (Genesis 28:22). He called it a *stone*. Why? Because all twelve stones coalesced into one supernal holy stone above them, as is written: *This stone* [230a] *that I set as a pillar will be a house of God*.[166]

"So here, the high priest places them on his heart, to cherish them constantly, as is written: *Aaron shall carry the names of the Children of Israel upon his heart before YHVH perpetually* (Exodus 28:29). Thus all is in mystery of twelve: twelve supernal entities concealed above, hidden in holy sublime mystery—mystery of Torah—issuing from a single subtle voice, as has been established. Twelve others concealed below, resembling them, issuing from within another voice, who is *stone*, as is written: *From there feeds the Stone of Israel* (Genesis 49:24).[167]

"So they have interpreted it in mystery of the verse *When all the flocks were gathered there, they would roll the stone* (Genesis 29:3)—*Shekhinah*, who is called *stone of testing* (Isaiah 28:16), *Stone of Israel*, whom they roll into exile. And it is written: *and they would put the stone back in*

its place on the mouth of the well (Genesis 29:3). After Her name, they are called ‘stones.’[168]

“How many types of stones there are! Some stones are the foundation of the house, as is written: *The king commanded, and they quarried great stones, costly stones, to lay the foundation of the house with hewn stone* (1 Kings 5:31). And there are precious supernal stones, namely, these twelve. These twelve are four arrays, with three in each array, in the four directions of the world, totaling twelve. Correspondingly, those four standards that journeyed in the desert, and those twelve tribes, three on each side, in the four directions of the world. All is one mystery, as has been established.[169]

“Come and see: When the high priest placed these twelve stones, wearing them in the breastpiece on the ephod, *Shekhinah* settled upon him. Those twelve stones were engraved with the names of all the tribes, every single tribe engraved on one stone. The letters were sunk into the stones, and when they shone the letters protruded, shining however was required. Among all the letters, the two letters ט ח (*ḥet, tet*) were not to be found, because there was no sin in any of them.”[170]

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah said, “If so, this is fine for ח (*ḥet*), whose name is determinative; but what about ט (*tet*), which is a טב (*tav*), good, letter? And we have learned: Whoever sees *tet* in his dream, it is *tav*, good, for him, because Torah inaugurated it with כי טוב (*ki tov*), *that it was good*, as is written: *God saw the light, that it was good* (Genesis 1:4). Now, since it is a good letter, why is it not written among those tribes?”[171]

He replied, “Because the two letters adjoin one another. Furthermore, the letter *tet* is hidden and concealed, and it transmits radiance of them all, for this letter is radiance of them all, and radiance derives only from this letter, as is written: *God saw the light, that it was* טוב (*tov*), *good*. It is the radiance of that light that is hidden and concealed, of

which is written *He does not withhold tov, goodness, from those who walk blameless* (Psalms 84:12). This is the light of all the tribes, so it is not engraved among them. Furthermore, all twelve issue from this concealed portico, which is in mystery of the letter ט (*tet*), and therefore it is concealed and hidden, not appearing among them.[172]

"Come and see: All these stones exist miraculously. When all of them shone, the face of the high priest shone, and the letters shone and protruded, to be perceived outwardly. When the face of the high priest shone, it was clear that the protrusion of the letters was favorable, and thereby it was known whether the priest was virtuous or not. Thus all was miraculous, as has been established."[173]

Rabbi Abba was in the presence of Rabbi Shim'on. He said to him, "Regarding what is written: *You shall place in the breastpiece of judgment* את האורים ואת התמים (*et ha-urim ve-et ha-tummim*), *the Urim and the Thummim* (Exodus 28:30), and we have learned: 'אורים (*Urim*), for they illumined what was required; תמים (*thummim*), for they fulfilled their words.' We need to know more!"[174]

He replied, "Certainly so! The breastpiece and ephod correspond to the Urim and Thummim, and this is mystery of tefillin and the knot of tefillin, corresponding to these two."[175]

He opened, saying, "*You will see My back, but My face will not be seen* (Exodus 33:23). *You will see My back*—we have learned that the blessed Holy One showed Moses the knot of tefillin. *But My face*—tefillin themselves. *But My face*—tefillin, supernal mystery of the Holy Name. [230b] *My back*—mystery of the knot of tefillin. This is well known to the Companions, for one is the speculum that shines and one is the speculum that does not shine.[176]

"Correspondingly, 'אורים (*Urim*), for they illumined with their words; תמים (*thummim*), for they fulfilled their words.' One is *face*, the other *back*. This mystery is voice and

speech: voice illumines, uttering; speech completes the word. One arises with the other, never separating from one another. Thus, breastpiece and ephod—one is *face*, the other *back*, and all one mystery, with no separation whatsoever."[177]

He said to him, "If so—that they never separate, and one who separates them, as we have learned, *separates an intimate* (Proverbs 16:28)—why is it written *It happened when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David at Keilah, that the ephod came down in his hand* (1 Samuel 23:6), whereas the breastpiece is not mentioned?"[178]

He replied, "Certainly so! Whatever is important is hidden and concealed and not mentioned much. Similarly, *who wore the linen ephod* (1 Samuel 22:18). What is more revealed is mentioned so that whatever is concealed and hidden may be kept covered; thus, whatever is more revealed is mentioned.[179]

"Therefore, the supernal Name is a mystery hidden and concealed, and is mentioned only through a name that is revealed. One is mentioned, the other treasured away; one is revealed, the other secret; and whatever is revealed is always mentioned. The name that is hidden is יהוה (*YHVH*); the name revealed is אדני (*Adonai*). So it is written with concealed letters and read with these letters, one covered by the other, so that supernal Glory may be hidden and concealed forever. All the ways of Torah are like this: revealed and secret. And all matters of the world, whether of this world or the world above, are entirely concealed and revealed."[180]

He opened, saying, "*They said to him, 'Tell us, on account of whom has this calamity come upon us? What is your work, and where do you come from? What is your country, and of what people are you?'* (Jonah 1:8). This verse should be contemplated. Everything they asked was in mystery of wisdom—as is written: *Tell us*, באשר (*ba-asher*), *on account*. Here they asked a mystery that is revealed, to

discover whether he derived from the seed of Joseph—at the sight of whose coffin the sea immediately split, becoming dry land, as is written: *The sea saw and fled* (Psalms 114:3). *The sea saw* the one of whom is written *He fled and went outside* (Genesis 39:12). Immediately, *the Jordan turned back* (Psalms, ibid.). That is why they asked him, *ba-asher, on account*, since it is written [of Joseph]: *ba'asher, inasmuch as, you are his wife*… (Genesis 39:9)—'If you derive from that seed, pray that the sea subside from raging against us.'[181]

"למי (*Le-mi*), *of whom* (Jonah 1:8): 'And if you derive from the seed of Jacob—of whom is written *Le-mi, Whose, are you, and where are you going?* (Genesis 32:18), and they were holy angels, whom he sent on a mission, and he was saved from that calamity—then pray to your Master so He will send His angel and we will be saved from this calamity.[182]

"'And if not, *what is your work?* (Jonah 1:8)—what is your daily occupation? *And where do you come from?* (ibid.)—who are your ancestors? *What is your country?* (ibid.)—is it a country deserving punishment? *And of what people are you?* (ibid.)—is it Amalek or one of the seven nations that deserve punishment?' They asked him everything fittingly.[183]

"What is written? *He said to them, 'I am a Hebrew'* (Jonah 1:9)—from the seed of Abraham, who sanctified the name of his Master throughout the world. *'And I revere YHVH, the God of Heaven, who made the sea and the dry land'* (ibid.). They asked him both openly and covertly to know about him, whereas he replied altogether openly.[184]

"What is written? *The men were greatly terrified* (Jonah 1:10). As soon as they heard the name of the blessed Holy One, they were immediately afraid; for they all knew of the miracles and mighty deeds that the blessed Holy One performed at the sea, so as soon as he told them the blessed Holy One's name, they were immediately greatly terrified of Him.[185]

“Furthermore, he told them that he was fleeing from Him; so they said, ‘*What have you done?* (Jonah 1:10). For you are fleeing from Him and not fulfilling His commands!’ Thus, ‘*What have you done?* For you have transgressed your Master’s commands!’[186]

“Come and see: Afterward they all converted, when they saw the miracles and mighty deeds that the blessed Holy One performed for Jonah on the sea. They all saw him falling into the sea, [231a] and that fish coming up and swallowing him in front of them. And when that great fish appeared before their eyes and vomited him onto dry land, they came to him and all of them converted, as is written: *Those devoted to vaporous lies will forsake their shame* (Jonah 2:9).[187]

“Come and see: All of these became righteous converts, wise in Torah, and eminent sages. For the blessed Holy One delights in all those who approach Him and sanctify His Name openly, because when His Name is sanctified openly, the concealed Name ascends His Throne of Glory, as is written: *I shall be sanctified in the midst of the Children of Israel* (Leviticus 22:32).[188]

“Come and see what is written: *They fastened the breastpiece from its rings to the rings of the ephod with a violet strand* (Exodus 39:21). Why *with a violet strand*? To show that this violet is bound to all, so all is in supernal mystery.[189]

“What is written? *A golden bell and a pomegranate* (Exodus 28:34), as we have established, and all is in supernal mystery, as we have said. What is written? *So that its sound may be heard when he comes into the sanctuary before* YHVH (ibid., 35)—for the sound that is heard is essential, and blessings settle upon the world by virtue of the priest who blesses all and performs all.[190]

“*A golden bell*, as we have established. *A pomegranate* —filled like a pomegranate, which is filled with all, and we have established all.[191]

"*He made the robe of the ephod, weaver's work, all of violet* (Exodus 39:22)—as already mentioned in mystery of the breastpiece and the ephod, and all is one. *All of violet*—fittingly so, as we have established, for violet is mystery of the light of the Throne; violet, joined with white radiance, all as one; and so violet for the ephod."[192]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "These various priestly garments are all a supernal mystery, so that garments below follow the pattern above. Come and see: Since Michael is the high priest, coming from the right side, why is it written of Gabriel *the man clothed in linen* (Daniel 12:7), for these garments are for the high priest? Well, from here we learn that left is always included in right and clothed in those garments.[193]

"Furthermore, Gabriel is appointed as messenger in this world, and every messenger appointed in this world must be clothed in garments of this world. As we have established in mystery of the soul: when she ascends, she is clothed in a garment formed on the pattern above, in order to be there. Similarly, when she descends from above—all according to her destination. Likewise, all those messengers appointed for a mission in this world, as we have established.[194]

"Come and see: This robe of the ephod covered him when he wore it. It is written: *Behind and in front You formed me, and You placed Your palm upon me* (Psalms 139:5). This verse has already been established, but come and see! When the blessed Holy One created Adam, male and female were created—attached to one another, female behind and male in front—until the blessed Holy One sawed them apart, and He arrayed her and brought her before Adam so that they could see each other face-to-face. Once they did, love increased in the world and they generated offspring in the world, which had not happened previously, as we have established.[195]

“After Adam sinned and the serpent copulated with Eve and injected her with slime, she gave birth to Cain, whose image was of above and below—from mystery of filth of the Other Side and from the side below. Therefore he was the first to perpetrate death in the world, caused by his side. It is the way of the serpent to lurk so as to kill; the one who issued from him followed his way. Thus it is written: *When they were in the field, Cain rose against Abel his brother and killed him* (Genesis 4:8).[196]

“We have found in ancient books that when Cain killed Abel he bit him repeatedly [231b] like a snake, until he plucked out his soul and killed him. All things revert to their primal element. If Cain had not derived from that side, he would not have behaved so toward his brother.[197]

“So, when Adam saw that Abel had been killed and Cain banished, he said, ‘From now on, why should I engender children?’ He separated from his wife for 130 years, and impure female spirits would come and be inflamed by him, and he engendered spirits and demons, called *afflictions of the children of Adam* (2 Samuel 7:14), as we have established.[198]

“Afterward, he became jealous, clothed in jealousy, and he joined his wife and engendered Seth, as is written: *He engendered in his likeness, according to his image, and called his name Seth* (Genesis 5:3)—this one was *in his likeness, according to his image*, which was not so previously with those first sons before. For previously, he had another conjoining, as has been established, until Eve arrived and the blessed Holy One arrayed her for Adam and they joined face-to-face. Thus it is written: *This one shall be called Woman* (Genesis 2:23)—this one is Woman, but the other one is not called so, as has already been established.[199]

“Thus, Adam and Eve were created as one, as is written: *Male and female He created them, and He blessed*

them (Genesis 5:2)—the two of them were as one; so, *Behind and in front You formed me*… (Psalms 139:5).[200]

"Come and see: The ephod and the breastpiece were *behind and in front*, and when the high priest wore them he resembled the supernal image. As has been said, then his face shone, letters protruded and rose radiantly, and the matter was known.[201]

"Thus, the arrangement of the ephod and the arrangement of the breastpiece are joined as one. Although their arrangements differ, all is in one mystery—one linked to the other, ephod united with breastpiece by four rings connected to this place and to that. They are mystery of those chariots linking this side below to those above, all in mystery of *ofanim* and *ḥayyot*.[202]

"It is written: *In the beginning God created heaven and earth* (Genesis 1:1), and they have established that the Dwelling was made entirely in this manner. Just as He fashioned the lower world after the pattern of the upper world, all its works resembling those above, so too all the works of the Dwelling follow the pattern of the upper world. This is the mystery: All the works of the Dwelling are works perfected above and below, to ensconce *Shekhinah* in the world, in upper habitations and lower habitations. Similarly, the lower Garden of Eden follows the pattern above and the pattern below, with all forms and images of the world appearing there. So, the making of the Dwelling and the making of heaven and earth are all as one.[203]

"It is written: *Lift your eyes on high and see: Who created these?*… (Isaiah 40:26). This verse has been established, but come and see! Could a person, by gazing above and lifting his eyes on high, be able to know and behold what it is not permitted to know and see? Rather, *Lift your eyes on high*—whoever wishes to behold and know the works of the blessed Holy One, let him lift his eyes on high and see countless forces and camps, diverse works,

one mightier than the other. Then, see and ask, 'Who created these?'[204]

"*Who created these?* We have already established the mystery: *Who created these*, for it is a place existing *on high*—hidden, concealed, and unknown—always susceptible to questioning, since that place is not revealed.[205]

"*The one who brings forth their array by number* (Isaiah 40:26). What does this mean: *the one who brings forth?* Well, because that concealed, hidden place brings forth all in mystery of the sound issuing from the shofar, and that sound is all the supernal forces and the count of all. From there appears mystery of sublime faith in all those supernal sides, until rungs extend downward and numerous forces diverge according to their kinds, all numbered and called by name.[206]

"*Because of His great might* (Isaiah 40:26)—the right side. *And vast power* (ibid.)—the left side. *Not one is missing* (ibid.)—aspects extending from two sides.[207] [232a]

"Alternatively, *Lift your eyes on high and see: Who created these?* (ibid.). This verse pertains to when the Dwelling was erected and arranged. Whoever saw the Dwelling, gazing above and below, saw all in the Dwelling, for all works of the world were arrayed in the Dwelling, as we have established. Whoever saw the clasps of the Dwelling, gazing upon them, saw in their gleam the radiance of the stars, for so the stars appear in the sky."[208]

He opened, saying, "*Hallelujah! Praise* YHVH *from the heavens, praise Him on the heights. Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His hosts. Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all stars of light. Praise Him, the heavens of the heavens, and the waters above the heavens. Let them praise* YHVH*'s name, for He commanded and they were created* (Psalms 148:1–5). Come and see: David uttered this praise corresponding to mystery of the Holy Name, totality of all praise. Two praises resemble mystery of the supernal Holy Name: this one, and the final praise of all, as is

written: *Hallelujah! Praise God in His sanctuary…* (Psalms 150:1). But the latter is for ten faiths, and the former is for seven, and all is one mystery in the Holy Name.[209]

"*Hallelujah! Praise YHVH from the heavens* (Psalms 148:1)—beginning of six directions expanding below, which is mystery susceptible to questioning, as is said: *For ask now of primal days that were before you, from the day God created a human on the earth and from one end of the heavens to the other end of the heavens* (Deuteronomy 4:32). Until here, one is permitted to ask; from here on, one is not permitted to ask, for it is a place concealed and hidden. Thus, *Praise YHVH from the heavens*.[210]

"*Praise Him on the heights* (Psalms 148:1)—two directions that are height of beginning, right and left, whence expand all others below in mystery of rungs, fittingly arranged.[211]

"*Praise Him, all His angels* (Psalms 148:2)—two pillars standing beneath the body, supporting the body. Come and see: Those pillars supporting the body stand here in mystery of angels, for the thighs are messengers moving from place to place, and from this mystery emerge those called 'angels,' who are messengers going from place to place on a mission of their Master.[212]

"*Praise Him, all His hosts* (Psalms 148:2)—the place from which issue all supernal holy forces, mystery of the sign of the holy Covenant, who is distinguished from all the other myriads, as we have said, for it is written: *YHVH of* צבאות (*Tseva'ot*), *Hosts, is His name* (Isaiah 48:2)—He is אות (*ot*), an ensign, among all other hosts and myriads.[213]

"*Praise Him, sun and moon* (Psalms 148:3)—in Him abides this mystery, and He is the sun shining; in Him appear supernal gleaming stars and constellations, as we have established.[214]

"Then Scripture returns above, to that place in the height of heights where all is embedded. And then, *Praise*

YHVH *from the earth* (Psalms 148:7)—corresponding to *Fire and hail*… (ibid., 8).[215]

"Come and see: Those stars below exist by the flow drawn from sublime mystery, for all bears the supernal image, as we have established. Thus, all those stars and constellations from the height of the firmament stand poised to conduct the world below it. From there extend rungs, reaching those stars below, none of whom exists on its own power at all, as we have established; all of them exist under the power above. Thus it is written: *Let them stand and save you—the astrologers, the stargazers* (Isaiah 47:13). All is controlled, as has been said."[216]

They made the tunics, שש (*shesh*), *linen,…and the turban, linen, and the ornaments of the caps, linen, and the breeches of linen, twisted linen* (Exodus 39:27–28).[217]

Rabbi Yose opened, "*In the end of days, the Mount of* YHVH*'s House will be established at the head of the mountains and elevated above the hills, and all the nations will stream to it* (Isaiah 2:2). *In the end of days*—when the blessed Holy One attends to the daughter of Jacob and raises her from the dust, and the sun unites with the moon. Then, *the Mount of* YHVH*'s House will be established*—Jerusalem above, who will be arrayed in Her adornments, shining with supernal light, since all light is perfected only by supernal light. For at that time, supernal light will shine upon Her seven times more than previously, as is written: *The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold, as the light of the seven days* (Isaiah 30:26).[218]

"*At the head of the mountains* (Isaiah 2:2)—the verse should read *at the heads*; why *at the head*? Well, this enhancement that She will have [232b] is at *the head of the mountains*. Who is *the head of the mountains*? The high

priest, who is *the head of the mountains*, head of all on the right side. It is He who adorns the house constantly, blessing Her, illumining Her face. Therefore, it *will be established*.[219]

"With what will He adorn Her? With those garments made on the supernal pattern, as has been established. Those garments all abide in mystery of six.[220]

"When this house will be adorned by *the head of the mountains*, who is the priest, it will be elevated above and joined with supernal existence, and the world will be illumined by that sublime radiance. Then, *it will be elevated above the hills* (Isaiah 2:2)—above all other supernal forces and camps—and then, *all the nations will stream to it* (ibid.).[221]

“Come and see: When the priest spreads his hands, a supernal spirit shines and emerges, and all lamps glow and lights flow, joining one another until the face of Assembly of Israel is illumined—all by means of the primordial light, who is the Priest. When the priest is aroused below, the Priest is aroused above. By actions below, an arousal is stimulated above. Thus, *the Mount of YHVH’s House will be established by the head of the mountains*.[222]

“*All the nations will stream to it* (Isaiah 2:2). For now, all other nations have chieftains appointed over them in heaven, but in that time the blessed Holy One will eliminate them and cast them down from their sovereignty, as is written: *I will punish the host of the heights on high* (ibid. 24:21). Once they are all removed from power, the blessed Holy One will be empowered alone, as is said: *YHVH alone will be exalted on that day* (ibid. 2:11). Then, *all the nations will stream to it*, as is written: *Many peoples will say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of YHVH, to the house of the God of Jacob…’* (ibid., 3).[223]

“All when the priest, who is *the head of the mountains*, will illumine Her. All in mystery of ש (*shesh*), six—six on all sides, illumining Her, for He illumines in mystery of six.”[224]

Rabbi El’azar, Rabbi Yitsḥak, and Rabbi Yehudah were traveling on the road. Rabbi El’azar said, “It is time to proceed with *Shekhinah*, for *Shekhinah* will settle upon us only through words of Torah.”[225]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “Let the leader open first!”[226]

Rabbi El’azar opened, saying, “*Puny am I and despised, yet Your precepts I have not forgotten* (Psalms 119:141). *Puny am I and despised*—sometimes King David praises himself, saying, *showing kindness to His anointed, to David* (ibid. 18:51), and it is written: *Utterance of David son of Jesse, utterance of the man raised on high, anointed of the God of Jacob* (2 Samuel 23:1). And sometimes he describes himself as poor, as is written: *For I am poor and needy*

(Psalms 86:1), and it is written: *Puny am I and despised*. He also said, *The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone* (ibid. 118:22).[227]

"Well, when he reached the rung of peace and attained true justice, he praised himself. And when he saw himself in distress, harassed by his enemies, he abased himself, calling himself poor, the least of all. Why? Because sometimes he dominated his enemies and sometimes he was distressed by them. Nevertheless, he always prevailed, and they could not overpower him.[228]

"King David humbled himself before the blessed Holy One; for whoever does so, the blessed Holy One elevates him above all. Thus, the blessed Holy One favored him in this world and in the world that is coming. In this world, as is written: *I will protect this city, delivering it for My sake and for the sake of My servant David* (Isaiah 37:35). In the world that is coming, as is written: *They will seek YHVH their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them* (Hosea 3:5). David was king in this world, and David will be king in the time to come. Therefore he said, *The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone* (Psalms 118:22).[229]

"Come and see: When the moon is deprived of light and does not shine, She is impoverished on all sides and darkened, without any light at all. And when the sun turns back toward Her, illumining Her, She adorns Herself for Him, like a female adorning herself for a male. Then She gains dominion [233a] throughout the world.[230]

"So David adorned himself in the same manner. Sometimes he is poor, and sometimes he is reveling in riches. Thus he said, *Puny am I and despised;* nevertheless, *Your precepts I have not forgotten*. Similarly, a person should humble himself in every way, becoming a vessel in which the blessed Holy One delights. This has already been established, as is written: *with the crushed and lowly in spirit* (Isaiah 57:15). Now I will open first."[231]

He opened, saying, “*He brought me there, and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like bronze, with a cord of flax and the measuring reed in his hand; and he was standing in the gateway* (Ezekiel 40:3). Ezekiel saw this in a vision of prophecy, and this *man* was a messenger in those garments; yet here, he said only *a man*, and not *the man clothed in linen*. Because when he is on a mission to execute Judgment or manifest Judgment, he is called *clothed in linen*; and when he comes for another purpose, he changes his manner. According to the mission, his appearance in those garments changes, and he changes from garment to garment. For he always occupies the left side, and there are various fashions that he wears, as do all those who come from his side.[232]

“*Whose appearance was like bronze*—in the garment of bronze mountains, called *mountains of bronze* (Zechariah 6:1).[233]

“This one brought measuring tools, to measure. This is not the Lamp of Adamantine Darkness, concealed and hidden; from there emerged this reed below, congealed from the radiance remaining from the Lamp of Darkness when it ascended and was engraved in unknown sapphirine scintillation. So that *measuring reed* pertains to measurement below.[234]

“Sometimes *the measuring reed*, and sometimes *the measuring line* (Jeremiah 31:39). And so, a *cord* and a *reed*, all to measure. There, all measurements of Ezekiel were by that *measuring reed*, whereas in the construction of the Dwelling, all was by *the measuring line*.[235]

“In the Dwelling, by that measurement below, *the measuring line*, resembling that *cord*; for as it begins to extend, there is one knot every cubit, and by that measurement it is measured and it is called a cubit. Thus, *twenty-eight by the cubit* (Exodus 36:9), for this is the length, and the width: *four by the cubit* (ibid.), and it is not written *four cubits*, since the *cubit* measures on all sides.[236]

“This emerges from mystery of the Lamp above, for the measurement of this below derives from that measurement above. The miniature measurement below includes one thousand and five hundred aspects, each aspect being twelve thousand cubits. Thus, one cubit advances through them all, and as for the cubit measuring this—the line of measurement extends and a cubit is revealed, measuring, and so with all those measurements.[237]

“*Twenty-eight by the cubit*—the length by one cubit; and the width: *four* by that cubit. Consequently, one cubit that is thirty-two measures, as is said: *and held in a measure the dust of the earth* (Isaiah 40:12). These thirty-two correspond to thirty-two paths issuing from above.[238]

“When the length is measured by this measurement, that length includes four aspects, each aspect being seven cubits. Thus, those seven cubits attain four aspects, in mystery of seven, amounting to twenty-eight in length. For seven is supernal mystery entirely, and all those thirty-two paths are included in seven, in mystery of the Holy Name.[239]

“Now, you might say, ‘But it is written: *a single measure for all the curtains* (Exodus 36:9)!’ Certainly: it is *a single measure*, although it extended cubit after cubit, one after another—all proceeding in mystery of the Lamp above, so that above and below share one measurement.[240]

“This is a measurement of intense holiness, for there is another measurement intended to cover this one, which is within. The other measurement, covering this one, amounts to a total of thirty-four, whereas within, a total of thirty-two. This is mystery [233b] of one covering another: thirty-two within thirty-four; thirty-two existing inside, thirty-four outside.[241]

“For the first measurement is holy, in holy colors, namely *twisted linen, and violet, purple, and crimson* (Exodus 36:8)—holy colors—and its total amounts to thirty-two. The second measurement, which is outside, covering

this one, amounts to a total of ד ל (*dalet, lamed*), thirty-four, which is the mystery written *Happy is one who considers* דל (*dal*), *the poor; on the day of evil YHVH will deliver him* (Psalms 41:2). *On the day of evil*, precisely, *YHVH will deliver him*—mystery of the count within, mystery of thirty-two. And of that count outside, what is written? *You shall make curtains of goat hair for a tent over the Dwelling* (Exodus 26:7). *Curtains of goat hair*—why *goat*? Well, mystery of its aspect, provided a place in mystery of holiness; so, *curtains of goat hair*, surely![242]

"It is written: *I went down to the nut grove to see the verdure of the valley…* (Song of Songs 6:11). This has already been established. However, just as a nut has a shell surrounding and covering the kernel, the kernel resting within, so too with everything holy: holiness within, the Other Side without. This is the mystery of *The wicked one surrounds the righteous* (Habakkuk 1:4). Therefore it is called a *nut*, as has been established.[243]

"Come and see: Whoever increases, decreases. Your mnemonic is: the bulls of the Festival—which keep diminishing. Here too: of what is within is written *The Dwelling you shall make of ten curtains* (Exodus 26:1); of what is without is written עשתי עשרה (*ashtei esreh*), *eleven, curtains* (ibid., 7)—increasing letters and decreasing the amount; increasing the amount and decreasing. Increasing the amount, as is written: *The length of the one curtain, thirty cubits, and a width of four cubits* (ibid., 8), amounting to a total of ד ל (*dalet, lamed*), thirty-four, for the most extreme type of poverty is called דל (*dal*), impoverished. Thus, increasing in amount, it increases in deficiency. And when the other decreases in amount—decreasing, it increases, attaining mystery of thirty-two, mystery of all faith, mystery of the Holy Name. So this ascends and that decreases: this ascends and decreases, whereas that decreases and ascends. This one within, that one without.[244]

"*The measuring line* begins to extend and measures out the boards, as is written: *They made the boards for the Dwelling of acacia wood, upright* (Exodus 36:20). These are mystery of seraphim, as has been established, for it is written *acacia wood*, עומדים (*omedim*), *upright*, and it is written *Seraphim omedim, were standing* (Isaiah 6:2).[245]

"This measurement is: *Ten cubits the length of the board, and a cubit and a half the width of the single board* (Exodus 36:21). Here is written *ten cubits*, and not *ten by the cubit*. These are three triads, which are nine, and one resting upon them, namely one spirit resting upon them.[246]

"We have already mentioned the extent of the cubit. This is mystery of extent: eleven and a half, ascending yet not ascending, for they are less than the *ofanim*. They have established this in mystery of the Holy Chariot, and there are twenty—ten on this side and ten on that side, attaining the mystery of supernal seraphim. Then, mystery of holiness rises until all are aroused in mystery of that *central bar* (Exodus 26:28), as has been established. Thus, it has a half, incomplete.[247]

"Mystery of this measurement of twenty planks totals 230, all based on measuring and counting. Such is the sum emerging from this measurement in mystery of those seraphim.[248]

"Curtains of the Dwelling, which we have mentioned, are supernal mysteries of mystery of heaven, as has been established, for it is written: *Spreading the heavens like a curtain* (Psalms 104:2). This mystery lies in the count that we have mentioned. There are curtains that we have mentioned in one mystery, and there are curtains in another mystery, all in mystery above. Thus, all is in order to know wisdom of every aspect, of every entity. Thereby one discerns between good and evil, between mystery of wisdom and what does not pertain to wisdom. The mystery of the first measurement, as has been said, embraces many aspects.[249]

“Mystery of the ark, based on calculation, regarding what it obtains, what it receives, and what it possesses. What it receives: two sides, and it obtains from those [234a] two sides. So it is a cubit on this side and a cubit on that side; thus, *two and a half cubits its length* (Exodus 37:1)—*two cubits* from two sides, and a half of its own. This is the length. As for the width and height, *a cubit and a half* (ibid.)—one from that side, obtaining more, as on the right and the left, and a half of its own. For a thing can settle only upon something else, so there is a half in each enumeration. Thus the ark receives from all, and abides totally in mystery of calculation.[250]

“It has already been established why the ark is overlaid with gold inside and outside. Its measure is based on the first measurement, all abiding in one mystery. The table, similarly—measured by that first measure.[251]

“However, this measure, abiding in mystery of Torah and by that first measurement mentioned by Father, is not to be used for measuring anymore—as this remains in mystery for the supremely wise: to know thereby mystery of wisdom, to discern between good and evil, between supernal wisdom and other wisdom.[252]

“All other works were measured by the cubit, by that measurement, except for the breastpiece, which was measured by the span, as has been established.[253]

“Come and see: The tunic—although they were all made in mystery of holiness, all is in mystery of ש״ש (*shesh*), six; made of *shesh*, linen; based on six. All those enhancements—to be clothed and arrayed in six and in mystery of six, and all in mystery of *the measuring line*.[254]

“*The measuring reed*, in the measurements of Ezekiel—for that is a House to endure in its place, with those partitions, those walls, those entrances, those doors, everything measured. But regarding the time to come, what is written of that measurement? *The side chambers widened as they wound higher and higher* (Ezekiel 41:7).

When *the measuring reed* presides, it will mount higher and higher in length and in breadth, so that the House expands in all directions, with none to look upon it malevolently, as has been established, for it is written: *Damascus shall be His resting place* (Zechariah 9:1). From that time on, Judgment will not be found in the world, for all will be firmly and completely established, as is said: *They shall no longer tremble, and the wicked shall afflict them no more* (2 Samuel 7:10).[255]

"Come and see: All measuring and measurements exist in the world so that this world may be established in mystery of the pattern above, linking this world to the world above, becoming all one in one mystery. At the time when the blessed Holy One will be aroused to renew the world, all worlds will share one mystery, and the Glory of the blessed Holy One will pervade all. Of then is written *On that day YHVH will be one and His name one* (Zechariah 14:9)."

Rabbi Yehudah opened after him, saying, "*The secret of YHVH is for those who revere Him, and to them He reveals His covenant* (Psalms 25:14). This verse has already been established. However, *The secret of YHVH is for those who revere Him*—that supernal mystery abiding in secrecy, concealed and hidden away, is accessible only to *those who revere Him*, who are constantly in awe of the blessed Holy One. They are worthy of those supernal secrets—keeping those sublime secrets hidden and concealed fittingly, since they are supernal mysteries. But, *to them He reveals His covenant*—mystery abiding in the enduring Covenant. *To them He reveals*—for it is a place susceptible to revelation, to being known.[256]

"Furthermore, *The secret of YHVH is for those who fear Him*—for they are secrets abiding in fear, and those fearing sin fear those supernal secrets. But, *to them He reveals His covenant*—to know and explain things, for these are matters susceptible to explanation.[257]

“Come and see: By forty-two letters the world was engraved and established, all of them a crown of the Holy Name. When they combine, they ascend by its letters above and descend below, adorned with crowns in the four directions of the world, so that it may endure.[258]

“Then those letters emerged and created the world above and below, in the world of unity and in the world of division—and they are called *mountains of Beter* (Song of Songs 2:17), mountains of division, which are watered when the south side begins to draw near. [234b] Then water flows, and through this energy flowing above, all is in joy.[259]

“When Thought arises in joyous Will, from Concealed of all Concealed, one radiance extends, flowing out of it; they approach one another, as has been established.[260]

“Those forty-two letters are supernal mystery, by which were created the upper world and the lower world; they are vitality and mystery of all worlds. Since this is the secret of all worlds, it is written *The secret of YHVH is for those who revere Him. And to them He reveals His covenant* (Psalms 25:14)—secret of engraved letters, patterns leaping in their engravings openly.[261]

“It is written: *You shall place in the breastpiece of judgment* את האורים ואת התמים (*et ha-urim ve-et ha-tummim*), *the Urim and the Thummim* (Exodus 28:30), and this has been established: *The Urim*—that shine, mystery of the speculum that shines, and this is engraving of letters of the Holy Name, in mystery of forty-two, by which worlds were created, and they were embedded in it. *And the Thummim*—mystery of those letters contained in the place of the speculum that does not shine, which is conducted by seventy-two engraved letters, mystery of the Holy Name. All of them are called Urim and Thummim.[262]

“Come and see: When those letters are embedded there, by that power shine other letters, engraved among names of the tribes—shining or darkening, all by the

mystery of those letters of Holy Names, as we have said. Those letters of Holy Names proceed according to mystery of Torah, and all worlds proceed in mystery of these letters. These names were hidden, embedded there; and as for the names of the tribes, their letters protruded above. Thus, all derives from mystery of those letters, and we have established all.[263]

"As has been said concerning mystery of the letters of Torah: ב (*Bet*), with which Torah begins, and as we have established, ב ברא (*Bet bara*), *bet created*, surely by supernal power, by potency of mystery of those letters. *Bet*, female; א (*alef*), male. Just as *bet* created, so *alef* generated letters, totality of twenty-two letters.[264]

"ה (*He*)—coupling with שמים (*shamayim*), *heaven*, enlivening and ensconcing Him. ו (*Vav*), הארץ (*ha-arets*), *the earth*, nourishing Her, arraying Her, providing Her the satisfaction She deserves. This mystery is את השמים ואת הארץ בראשית ברא אלהים (*Be-reshit bara Elohim et ha-shamayim ve-et ha-arets*), *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth* (Genesis 1:1). ו ואת (*Vav, ve-et*)—totality of twenty-two letters, and earth is nourished, absorbing them within, as is said: *All the streams flow to the sea* (Ecclesiastes 1:7), corresponding to mystery of ואת הארץ (*ve-et ha-arets*), *and the earth*, gathering all within Her, receiving them. *The earth* absorbs *vav*, receiving it as nourishment.[265]

"This mystery is: The Dwelling was established only by Moses, since from that side another supernal rung was aroused to sustain it, yielding sustenance for all. This is the mystery of *Moses erected the Dwelling* (Exodus 40:18), erecting it by those letters with which heaven and earth were created.[266]

"So all the works of the Dwelling were fashioned by Bezalel, by mystery of engraved letters with which heaven and earth were created. He was therefore called בצלאל (*Betsal'el*), since he knew the engraving of letters by which heaven and earth were created. If he had not known them,

he could not have fashioned those works of the Dwelling. Why? Well, just as the supernal Dwelling existed and was arrayed only by the mystery of those letters, so here, the Dwelling below existed and was arrayed only by mysteries of those letters.[267]

"Bezalel would permute those letters, and by the mystery of each permutation he fashioned artistry. For every task of the Dwelling, with each permutation he produced one work of artistry, all fittingly. So with all works of the Dwelling and all limbs and enhancements of the Dwelling, all was by permutation of letters of the Holy Name. Yet when he came to erect it, he could not do so. Why? Because the intention aroused by those letters was transmitted to Moses alone. He knew the intention aroused by all those letters, so [235a] the Dwelling was erected by him, as is written: *Moses erected, Moses placed, Moses set up* (Exodus 40:18)—whereas Bezalel did not know and could not erect it."[268]

Rabbi Yitsḥak opened after him, saying, "*YHVH, in Your strength the king rejoices, and in Your victory how greatly he exults! His heart's desire You gave to him.... Life he asked of You* [—*You gave it to him*]... (Psalms 21:2–5). This song was uttered by David solely for the praise of Assembly of Israel, who is gladdened by the blessed Holy One with joy of Torah, called *strength*, as is written: *YHVH gives strength to His people* (Psalms 29:11). *The king rejoices*—Assembly of Israel, who is called *king*, as is written: *He became king in Jeshurun* (Deuteronomy 33:5).[269]

"*And in Your victory how greatly he exults!*—victory of the right, as is said: *My right hand gave me victory*, and: *Give victory with Your right hand and answer me* (Psalms 60:7).[270]

"Alternatively, *How greatly* יגיל (*yagel*), *he exults!*—an extra י (*yod*), mystery of holy enduring Covenant, joy of all. And all refers to this *king*.[271]

"*Life he asked of You—You gave it to him* (Psalms 21:5). From here we learn that King David had no life at all—except that Adam gave him some of his own. As has been established, King David endured for seventy years, and those seventy years were given to him by the blessed Holy One from the years of Adam. By these he endured, and he was given length of days in this world and in the world that is coming. Thus, *Life he asked of You—You gave it to him*.[272]

"*Great is his glory through Your victory* (Psalms 21:6)—for He is *great*, as is written: *Great is our Lord and mighty in power* (Psalms 147:5); He is surely called *great*. This is the mystery of *God made the two great lights* (Genesis 1:16)—they were surely *great*. Nevertheless, He is called *great*, as is said: *Great is our Lord and mighty in power*; and the blessed Holy One is called *great* only by this, as is written: *Great is YHVH and highly praised in the city of our God, His holy mountain* (Psalms 48:2). How is He *great*? *In the city of our God, His holy mountain.*[273]

"*For You granted him blessings forever* (Psalms 21:7)—for this is blessing of the whole world, and all blessings of the world issue from here. This is *blessing*, and this is the mystery of *And you will be a blessing* (Genesis 12:2), for here dwell all blessings above, emerging from here to the whole world; so it is called *blessing*.[274]

"*You will gladden him with joy* (Psalms 21:7). Here is written *You will gladden him*, and there is written *Jethro was glad* (Exodus 18:9); for the blessed Holy One will eventually raise Assembly of Israel from the dust, embrace Her in mystery of the right, and renew Her with renewal of the moon by the sun, as is written: *You will gladden him with the joy of Your presence*. *Of your presence*—being before You, joyfully facing You, in the fullness that You will perfect at that time. For when the Temple was destroyed, She was emptied of all Her fullness, as is said: *Dwindled is she who bore seven…* (Jeremiah 15:9), and it is written: *I*

shall be filled with what had been destroyed (Ezekiel 26:2).[275]

"Come and see: When Moses was about to erect the Dwelling, he gazed upon all the components, which were perfect, and then he erected it. All those works in the Dwelling were brought before Moses, one by one, and this is the mystery of *Virgins behind her, her companions, are brought to you* (Psalms 45:15). *Are brought to you*—as is written: *They brought the Dwelling to Moses* (Exodus 39:33). Why did they do so? Because that was the moment for Moses' coupling to be consummated, so *they brought the Dwelling to Moses*, as a bride is brought to the house of the groom. For first the bride must be brought to his house, as is said: *My daughter I have given to this man as a wife* (Deuteronomy 22:16); and afterward he comes to her, as is written: *and he came to her* (Genesis 29:23)—and it is written: *Moses came to the Tent of Testimony* (Numbers 17:23).[276]

"Here, what is written? *Moses could not come into the Tent of Meeting, for the cloud had settled upon it and the glory of YHVH filled the Dwelling* (Exodus 40:35). Why? Because it was arraying itself like a woman arraying and adorning herself for her husband; and while she is adorning herself, it is not fitting for her husband to enter. So, *Moses could not* [*come into the Tent of Meeting*]..., and therefore, *they brought the Dwelling to Moses*. What is written? *Moses saw* [*all the tasks, and, look, they had done it as YHVH had commanded*]... (Exodus 39:43).[277] [235b]

"Come and see: Throughout all the works of the Dwelling, the color violet appeared, for violet is a color to be adorned with mystery of all colors. What is written? *They made the medallion of the holy diadem.... And they put on it a strand of violet*... (Exodus 39:30–31). This has already been established in mystery of what is written: *You shall make a medallion of pure gold and engrave upon it with seal-engravings: 'Holy to YHVH'* (ibid. 28:36). *And they wrote*

upon it an inscription of seal-engravings: 'Holy to YHVH' (ibid. 39:30).[278]

"In mystery of the Dwelling abide supernal mysteries in mystery of the supernal Holy Name. אדני (*Adonai*)—mystery of the Dwelling, mystery corresponding to the pattern above, mystery of the ark, as is written: *See, ark of the covenant,* אדון (*Adon*), *Lord of, all the earth* (Joshua 3:11). *Adon, Lord of, all the earth*—holy mystery of the name א ד נ י (*alef, dalet, nun, yod*), corresponding to mystery of the supernal Holy Name יהוה (*YHVH*), and these letters correspond to those.[279]

"א (*Alef*) is י (*yod*), this mystery resembling that, as has been established.[280]

"ד (*Dalet*) is mystery of ה (*he*), this resembling that, all one pattern and mystery.[281]

"נ (*Nun*) is mystery of the letter ו (*vav*); although one is male, and the other female, yet one is comprised in the other, as has been established: נון (*nun*), ו (*vav*) in the middle, since it is one whole.[282]

"ה (*He*) is mystery of the letter י (*yod*), for here this is Small Wisdom, called Wisdom of Solomon.[283]

"These letters combine with those, all one mystery, coalescing with one another; all is one, and all one mystery in holy letters.[284]

"Thus, the Dwelling below on earth abides in mystery of the higher Dwelling, and that Dwelling abides in mystery of another Dwelling, highest of all. All are comprised within one another, becoming one, and thus it is written: *The Dwelling will be one* (Exodus 26:6).[285]

"It is written: *First of nations, Amalek, and his end unto destruction* (Numbers 24:20). Come and see: On the day that the Dwelling was erected, it was erected by Moses, as has been said, for it is written: *Moses erected the Dwelling* (Exodus 40:18)—it could not stand until he himself erected it. This may be compared to a *matronita*, whom no one but her husband is permitted to raise up. So too, all those artisans

came to erect the Dwelling, but it could not be raised by them, until finally Moses came and erected it, for he is master of the house.[286]

"Once Moses erected the Dwelling below, another Dwelling was erected above, as has been established, for it is written: *The Dwelling was erected* (Exodus 40:17). Why *was erected*, without explaining by whom? Well, it was erected by mystery of the upper world—concealed and hidden—by means of mystery of Moses, to be arrayed with him.[287]

"What is written above? *All the wise ones who were doing* [236a] *all the holy work came*… (Exodus 36:4)—these are *the wise ones who form* right and left and all those other aspects, which are ways and paths entering the sea, filling it. They fashioned the Dwelling above and arrayed it.[288]

"Similarly, *Bezalel and Oholiab* (Exodus 36:1), one on the right side and one on the left—Bezalel to the right and Oholiab to the left—one from Judah and one from Dan. Then, *and every wise-hearted man* (ibid.); *all the wise ones who were doing* [*all the holy work*], as we have established, all corresponding to the supernal pattern.[289]

"On the day that the Dwelling was erected, death was abolished from the world. Do not say 'abolished,' but rather 'withdrawn from the world,' since it could not prevail, as we have established. For the evil impulse will not be abolished from the world until King Messiah arrives and the blessed Holy One delights in His works, and then, *He will swallow up death forever* (Isaiah 25:8). When the Dwelling was erected by Moses, the power of the evil impulse was isolated and subdued, and could not prevail. At that moment, mighty Samael, fury of the left, was removed from potency of the evil serpent and could not dominate the world nor attach himself to a human, leading him astray."[290]

Rabbi Yehudah said, “When Israel made the Calf, what is written? *Moses took the Tent and pitched it for himself outside the camp* (Exodus 33:7). Why? Because he saw the evil impulse moving among them. Moses said, ‘The side of holiness should not dwell within the side of impurity.’”[291]

Rabbi El’azar said, “As long as the side of holiness rules, the impure side cannot rule and is subdued before it. Thus we have learned: As long as Jerusalem is full, wicked Rome will be desolate.”[292]

He opened, saying, “*She said to the servant, ‘Who is that man walking through the field toward us?’ The servant said, ‘He is my master*’… (Genesis 24:65). What is written previously? *Rebekah raised her eyes and saw Isaac, and she alighted from the camel* (ibid., 64). Now, why did this verse have to be written in the Torah? If it is because she saw the beauty of Isaac, why did she alight from the camel?[293]

“Well, this verse constitutes a mystery. Come and see: *She saw Isaac*. How did she know that he was Isaac? Well, *She saw Isaac*—at that moment she saw something she had not known; she saw him in wrath of harsh Judgment, and she saw that the completion of harsh wrath is a camel below. This is mystery of death, and therefore she alighted, slipping herself off that camel. For when harsh Judgment gazes, that camel is empowered, so she slipped herself off of it and sat there no longer.[294]

“Come and see: This גמל (*gamal*), camel, corresponds to the mystery written וגמולו (*u-gmulo*), *and his due, He will repay him* (Proverbs 19:17)—גמול (*gemul*), requital, of the wicked. This is the camel poised to devour all and exterminate all; this one is always ready to confront human beings. Therefore, whoever sees a camel in his dream is being shown death decreed upon him, from which he has been saved.[295]

“Come and see: This side of impurity is called so because it brought death upon the world. This is the one who seduced Adam and his wife, and its rider is Samael,

who comes to lead the world astray and inflicts death upon all. Thus he comes and dominates all.[296]

"Adam drew him upon himself, and consequently he was drawn after them until he seduced them. Therefore, Solomon said, *Do not come near the door of her house* (Proverbs 5:8), for whoever comes near her—she emerges, adorned, and is drawn to him.[297]

"So, when Rebekah saw that she was supposed to join the side of harsh Judgment—as soon as she saw Isaac, mystery of harsh Judgment, and saw that from that side issues another, fierce Judgment from slag of gold—immediately *she alighted from the camel*, to break herself loose from Judgment, from that slag.[298]

"Come and see: [236b] When Israel did that deed, causing that sin, why a calf and not another aspect? Now, if you say that they chose a calf—not so! Rather, they said, *Rise up, make us Elohim, gods, that will go before us* (Exodus 32:1), and Aaron sought to delay them.[299]

"However, surely the deed was done fittingly. For from the side of gold emerges dross when gold is refined, and from there spread all those aspects of the left, smelting of that dross of gold, diverging in many directions. All those appearing red, hue of gold, exist in the mountains when the sun shines intensely; for the intensity of the sun manifests gold, generating it in the earth. The one appointed over the sun's intensity has the appearance of a calf, and is called *scourge raging at noon* (Psalms 91:6), issuing from a calf, red smelting of gold. All of these come from that redness, impure spirit; all those branching out from impure spirit spread throughout the world.[300]

"This impure spirit is the evil serpent, and there is one riding on it; they are male and female, called אלה (*elleh*), these, for they appear in the world in all their aspects. And the Holy Spirit is called זאת (*zot*), this—mystery of Covenant, holy mark always present in a man. Similarly, זה (*Zeh*), *This, is YHVH* (Isaiah 25:9); *Zeh, This, is my God* (Exodus 15:2). But

those are called *elleh, these*; so it is written: *Elleh, These, are your gods, O Israel!* (ibid. 32:4). Therefore it is written: *Even elleh, these, will be forgotten*, ואנכי (*ve-anokhi*), *yet I*—mystery of *zot, this—will not forget you* (Isaiah 49:15). Similarly it is written: *Over elleh, these, I weep* (Lamentations 1:16), for that sin caused them much weeping.[301]

"Alternatively, *Over these I weep*. Why? Because this realm was empowered to dominate Israel and destroy the Temple. Therefore it is written: *Over these I weep*. Mystery of the word: *over these*—side of defilement, empowered to dominate. אני (*Ani*), *I, weep*—Holy Spirit, called *I*.[302]

"Now, you might say, 'Look at what is written: *Elleh, These, are the words of the covenant* (Deuteronomy 28:69)!' Certainly so! For all of them are fulfilled only through *elleh, these*, site of all curses—as we have established, for he is cursed, as is written: *Cursed are you among all animals* (Genesis 3:14). Therefore Scripture anticipates by saying *elleh, these*, which stands poised for one who transgresses *the words of the covenant*.[303]

"*Elleh, These, are the commandments that YHVH commanded* (Leviticus 27:34)—because a commandment of Torah is for a person to be purified, not to deviate to this path, to be on guard, to disengage from them.[304]

"Now, you might say, '*Elleh, These, are the offspring of Noah* (Genesis 6:9)!' Certainly so! For look, Ham issued, who is father of Canaan, and it is written: *Cursed be Canaan* (ibid. 9:25)—he is mystery of *these*![305]

"So all these are smelted dross of gold. And Aaron offered gold, which is his other side, for he is included in power of fire. All is one—one side—gold and fire. The impure spirit, always haunting the desert, found a place at that moment on which to fasten. Whereas when Israel stood at Mount Sinai, they were purified from the primordial slime that he injected into the world—inflicting death upon all—now he prevailed over them as before, defiling them,

over-powering them, bringing death upon them and upon the whole world and upon generations after them, as is written: *I Myself said, 'You are gods, children of the Most High, all of you.' But like Adam you shall die*… (Psalms 82:6–7).[306]

"Therefore, afterward Aaron purified himself in mystery of supernal faith during those seven holy days, finally being purified by a calf. Come and see: Aaron had to be purified completely, because if not for him, the Calf would not have emerged. Why? Because Aaron is the right, power of sun and gold. Impure spirit descended and blended there, so Israel was defiled, and he was defiled until being purified.[307]

"Why was he defiled? Because the Calf emerged, which is of the left side, which is a bull, whence comes a calf. This is the left, as has been said, for it is written: [237a] *and on the left, the face of a bull* (Ezekiel 1:10). Aaron, who is the right, includes the left, and it emerged by him. Therefore, he was given a calf, corresponding to what he induced.[308]

"Thus, this impure spirit was empowered and ruled as before over the world, for when Israel sinned they drew upon themselves that evil impulse as before. And when Israel became purified and sought to purge themselves, they had to offer a goat, since the goat is a portion of that evil impulse, that impure spirit, as we have said.[309]

"It is written: *They exchanged their glory for the image of a bull* (Psalms 106:20). What is *the image of a bull*? A calf. *A bull* is from the left side; Aaron, the right, absorbed the left, which was strengthened by him and emerged through him.[310]

"Come and see: *They exchanged their glory*—*Shekhinah*, who went before them, and they exchanged Her for an impure realm, another god. Therefore this filth will not be removed from the world until the time when the blessed Holy One eliminates it, as is written: *I will eliminate the*

spirit of impurity from the earth (Zechariah 13:2), as we have established.[311]

"It is written: *He made it into a molten calf* (Exodus 32:4), yet it is written: *I threw it into the fire and out came this calf* (ibid., 24), indicating that he did not make it. If so, what is the meaning of *He made it*? Well, surely, as we have established: were it not for Aaron, the impure spirit would not have been empowered to blend with gold. But every necessary enhancement it found available to be formed.[312]

"Come and see: One person practices sorcery and succeeds, while another does exactly the same and fails, because for these practices a qualified man is required. Come and see from Balaam, who was qualified for his sorcery to succeed, for it is written: *Utterance of the man* סתום העין (*setum ha-ayin*), *whose eye is closed*, שתום העין (*shetum ha-ayin*) (Numbers 24:3)—all is one, for one eye was always closed, and his vision was askance; his eyes were blemished.[313]

"It is written: *He shall send it off in the hand of* איש עתי (*ish itti*), *a timely man* (Leviticus 16:21)—totally prepared, his vision unfit. But of one who serves with the Holy Spirit, what is written? *No man in whom there is a defect shall come forward, no blind man nor lame* (ibid. 21:18).[314]

"Here, all was arranged for the impure spirit, providing it a place to rule. It found a desert, completely desolate, as is written: *fiery serpents and scorpions and thirst* (Deuteronomy 8:15), for there is its dominion. It found sufficient gold; it found Aaron, to be empowered by the right and absorbed in it. Thus it perfected its domain fittingly, and emerged complete.[315]

"How do we know it was the impure spirit? As is written: *Please, this people has committed a great sin* (Exodus 32:31). *A great sin*—the impure spirit, primordial serpent, as we have mentioned in various places.[316]

"When Aaron wished to be purified, he offered a calf, from that side, to execute judgment upon it. At first, he

enabled it to rule; now, executing judgment upon it, overpowering it—for once judgment is executed upon this side, all those who rule from its side are subdued.[317]

"Come and see: In Egypt, of their side is written *Do not eat of it raw…, but fire-roasted…* (Exodus 12:9). *Fire-roasted*—so that a spreading aroma may rise. *Its head with its shanks* (ibid.)—to break it and subdue it, so that all those deriving from its side are powerless. Similarly, *a perfect red cow that has no blemish…* (Numbers 19:2)—to subdue all those aspects of impurity so that they may not rule."[318]

Rabbi Abba said to him, "But the cow is holy and pure! So why?"[319]

He replied, "So it is. As they have established, it is totality of four kingdoms. *A cow*—as is said: *For like a stubborn cow* [*Israel is stubborn*] (Hosea 4:16). *Red*—kingdom of Babylon, as is written: *You are the head of gold* (Daniel 2:38). *Perfect*—kingdom of Media. *That has no blemish*—kingdom of Greece, who are near the paths of faith. *On which no yoke has been put* (Numbers 19:2)—kingdom of Edom, on which no yoke was put.[320]

"Mystery of this matter: Although these verses lend themselves to various interpretations, all are one. As has been said, it is written: *Who can produce pure from impure? Is it not the One?* (Job 14:4). *Who can produce pure* [237b] *from impure?*—this mystery is as follows. This is *pure* issuing *from impure*, for at first it is *impure*, but now that judgment has been executed upon it and it has been burned in blazing fire and turned into ashes, it is *pure from impure—pure* emerging *from impure*.[321]

"So all those occupied with it become impure, for it is certainly so; and when it is turned into ashes, until these are gathered and removed, they defile all, as is said: *He who gathers the cow's ashes shall wash his garments and will be impure* [*until evening*] (Numbers 19:10). *Ashes*, as is said: *You will trample the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet* (Malachi 3:21). But as soon as

water is poured over these ashes, they become *pure from impure*.[322]

"Mystery of the matter, as is written: *waters of* חטאת (*ḥattat*), *expiation* (Numbers 8:7), as is said: *At the opening crouches ḥattat, sin* (Genesis 4:7). Since it is surely *ḥattat, sin*, at first is written *he shall take it outside the camp* (Numbers 19:3), and so it is given to the prefect and not to the high priest.[323]

"This is *pure from impure*—at first *impure*, and now *pure*. As soon as every aspect of impure spirit sees this, it flees and abandons that place.[324]

"*Waters of ḥattat, sin*, surely—*waters of* נדה (*niddah*), *defilement* (Numbers 19:9), total impurity. Thus, Holy Spirit prevails, and impure spirit is subdued, deprived of all power. This is judgment of impure spirit: *outside the camp* (ibid., 3), since it is impure spirit, and it is written: *Your camp shall be holy* (Deuteronomy 23:15)."[325]

Rabbi Abba came and kissed him.[326]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Although all these words are accurate, and the impure spirit must be subdued on all sides, come and I will tell you one secret, which is permitted to be revealed only to holy ones of the Highest!

"Come and see: To this realm, which is impure spirit, the blessed Holy One has conferred power to rule in the world in various respects. He can inflict harm, and one is not allowed to treat him with disdain, for we must be on guard against him so that he may not denounce us in our holiness. Therefore, we have one secret: we must provide him a tiny place within our holiness, since from holiness his power issues.[327]

"In mystery of tefillin we must conceal one hair of a calf, sticking out visibly. For this thread of hair does not defile except when combining and becoming the size of a barley grain, but less than this does not defile. That hair must be inserted in our supernal holiness, providing him a place so that he may not denounce us in our holiness. And a bit of

that hair should stick out visibly, for when he sees that person in supernal holiness, with his own share participating there, he will not denounce him and cannot harm him above or below, since he has been given a place. But if this portion is not given to him anywhere in this holiness, he can harm that person below and ascend, accusing above, saying, 'So-and-so who is acting holy now did such-and-such on a certain day, and these are his sins!' Consequently, judgment is rendered against that person and he is punished by him.[328]

"So did Israel act, for they knew this secret. When they began to sanctify themselves in supernal holiness on Yom Kippur, they would be careful to immediately provide a portion to this realm, giving him a share among themselves, so that he would not loom as an accuser against them and they would not come to mention Israel's sins—for numerous ravaging bands and numerous camps are poised to grasp a word from him when he begins to accuse. Happy is the share of one who can be saved from having his sins mentioned above, from being looked upon adversely!"[329]

Meanwhile, Rabbi Abba's eyes were flowing. He said to him, "*Abba, Abba*, go untangle your knot and mind your absorption! For mysteries of Torah have been given to the righteous, as is written: *The secret of YHVH is for those who revere Him* (Psalms 25:14).[330]

"Come and see: On the day of Rosh Hashanah, the world is judged, and the holy Court—the blessed Holy One—sits and judges the entire world. The Other Side stands on one side, staring at all those condemned to death, who are recorded before him. When [238a] Israel arouses compassion upon themselves by the sound of the shofar, he is totally confounded, unaware of the condemned and not noticing them. Eventually, for all those who have not turned back in repentance and are condemned to death, decrees are surely issued from the palace of the King and are

delivered to him. Once delivered, the decrees cannot be revoked until judgment is executed.[331]

"All of Israel should beware of him, especially a person alone. And especially regarding a supernal mystery above, we should be on guard, giving him—every single month as the moon is about to be renewed—one goat, so that he will not contest the joyous renewal, but will take his rightful share, while the sacred moon imbibes holiness, fittingly renewed.[332]

"When it is renewed each month, it is called 'youth,' as we have established, whereas this other one—always immersed in defilement, never to emerge—is called *an old and foolish king* (Ecclesiastes 4:13). Thus, holy Israel, one nation in holy unity, has been given advice by the blessed Holy One on how to be saved from all. Happy are they in this world and in the world that is coming, as is written: *Your people, all of them righteous, will inherit the land forever—sprout of My planting, work of My hands, that I may be glorified* (Isaiah 60:21).[333]

"*They brought the Dwelling to Moses*… (Exodus 39:33). It is written: *Above the expanse over their heads*… (Ezekiel 1:26). *Above the expanse*—the expanse placed over the living beings. When they ascend within a certain air striking them, they do not raise their heads to gaze above; for *the spirit of the living being* strikes all of them, and by that spirit they all ascend, as is written: *When the living beings rose off the ground, the wheels rose alongside them* (ibid., 19), and it is written: *for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels* (ibid., 20).[334]

"Why do they ascend? Well, when that air strikes them, it lifts these four that are beneath *the living being*, and they raise Her above, finally bringing Her to supernal radiance. This corresponds to the mystery written: *Virgins behind her, her companions, are brought to you* (Psalms 45:15), for these four are called so. They never move from this *living*

being, who is the eternal Throne, and they raise Her from below to above, preparing the Throne for the one above. This is the mystery written: *They lifted the ark and it rose above the earth* (Genesis 7:17). When She rises and they raise Her, then it is written: *They brought the Dwelling to Moses* (Exodus 39:33). *They brought the Dwelling*—as is said: *are brought to you* (Psalms 45:15), and it is written: *They lifted the ark*.[335]

"*To Moses*—as is said: *an image like the appearance of* אדם (*adam*), *a human being, upon it above* (Ezekiel 1:26), namely mystery of *adam*. How do we know that he is called *adam*? As is written: *My spirit shall not abide* באדם (*ba-adam*), *in the human, forever*, בשגם הוא (*be-shaggam hu*), *for he is but, flesh* (Genesis 6:3)—equivalent to משה (*Mosheh*), Moses. Thus, upon this Throne appears the image of *adam*, namely Moses.[336]

"*They brought the Dwelling*—these four living beings, when they ascend, as we have said. *They brought the Dwelling*—all members of the body, all in holy desire, all grasping it, so that male and female unite as one. *They brought the Dwelling*—bringing the bride to the bridal chamber. First they must raise Her and bring Her to Him, and then He will always come to Her, as we have established.[337]

"*They brought the Dwelling*—mystery of all those who bind unification, unifying mystery of faith every day. These four living beings raise this Throne until they bring Her to Moses. Once they join Her to Moses, those [below] are the ones who gain blessings from the source of life through this mystery of their binding unification.[338]

"This mystery applies when they bind unification of all fittingly. This is the mystery written: *Moses saw all the work,... and Moses blessed them* (Exodus 39:43)—gaining blessings from the place where Moses dwells. This is *the holy work* (ibid. 36:4), for he knew how to arrange the holy work properly.[339]

“So whoever offers prayer and binds unification is examined to see whether that prayer and unification are fitting. And if they [238b] are, then he is blessed first from the place whence all blessings issue, as is written: *and, look, they had done it as YHVH had commanded Moses*. Immediately, *Moses blessed them* (Exodus 39:43).

“Therefore, *they brought the Dwelling to Moses* (Exodus 39:33)—for he is master of the house—to see how his house was arranged. He should observe Her arrayal and Her mysteries, for no one else is allowed to gaze upon those secrets and mysteries of Hers, only Moses. So, *They brought the Dwelling to Moses*. And when they did so, they brought him everything—specific members, every single one—to arrange member with member, inserting one into the other. When they sought to arrange these with one another and to insert one into the other, they did not succeed. Once they brought it to Moses, he immediately succeeded, and every single member rose and fit in place, as is written: *Moses erected the Dwelling* (Exodus 40:18), and it is written: *The Dwelling was erected* (ibid., 17), as we have established.[340]

“Come and see: At that moment, when Moses began to erect the Dwelling and began to arrange the members, inserting one into the other, all the members and the whole configuration of the impure Other Side became enfeebled. As this side, which is holy, begins to strengthen, the impure Other Side weakens; one is strengthened and the other weakened. As we have established, when this one strengthens, as long as it maintains potency, all members of the Other Side are enfeebled. One is full, the other desolate. This mystery is Jerusalem and wicked Rome: when one is full, the other is desolate. So when one is strengthened, the other is weakened.[341]

“Thus, *Moses erected the Dwelling*—to be strengthened by mystery above, not by mystery below. So Moses, who was of mystery within the resplendent speculum, had to be the

one by whom the Dwelling was illumined—not by another. The moon must be illumined by the sun, not by another. Come and see: Assembly of Israel must ascend and cleave to the sun."[342]

He opened, saying, "*This is the teaching of the ascent offering. It is that which ascends* (Leviticus 6:2)."[343]

Rabbi Shim'on said, "Although we have spoken of this, it is written: *Human and beast You deliver, O YHVH* (Psalms 36:7). The *ascent offering* is ascension and binding of Assembly of Israel above, and Her union within the World that is Coming, so that all becomes one. She is called *ascent offering*, Holy of Holies—She is called *ascent offering* because She ascends, adorned, all becoming one in a single bond in joy.[344]

"Since She ascends higher and higher, it is written: *This is the Torah of the ascent offering*—mystery of male and female as one, Written Torah and Oral Torah. *The ascent offering*—ascending within the World that is Coming, to be bound within that which is called Holy of Holies, and *ascent offering* is surely Holy of Holies![345]

"Consequently, the arrangement of its slaughtering is on the north side, which is the left side, for Oral Torah ascends in love only when the north side is aroused, as we have established, for it is written: *His left hand beneath my head* (Song of Songs 2:6). Then She ascends in love and is adorned with the right and joined with the center, and all is illumined from mystery of Holy of Holies. This derives from mystery of *adam, human*, through aspiration of the priest, prayer, and song.[346]

"As we have established, the ascent offering is Holy of Holies in mystery of supernal spirit. For three spirits are bound as one: lower spirit, called Holy Spirit; inner spirit in the center, called *spirit of wisdom and understanding*—lower spirit is also called so, but this spirit, issuing from the shofar, is comprised of fire and water—and supernal spirit, sealed in silence, in which abide all holy spirits and all

shining faces. Therefore, the ascent offering turns back into actual spirit.[347]

"Afterward, from mystery of *beast* they are supplied and nourished, so that another spirit, within impurity, may be bound—from those fatty portions, as has been said. Thus, the ascent offering is Holy of Holies.[348]

"Other offerings, to make peace in the world—all of them from many sides and masters of judgment, to be removed, illumined by the Will, assuaged. They are called 'offerings of lesser holiness,' since they are not crowned above, [239a] above in Holy of Holies; so they are of lesser holiness and may be slaughtered anywhere, as has been established. But the ascent offering, mystery of Holy of Holies, is not like other offerings, for it is entirely holy.[349]

"Come and see what is written: *The priest shall wear his linen raiment* (Leviticus 6:3)—garments intended specifically for holiness. בד (*Bad*), *linen*—unique, designated for holiness. It is also written: *They are holy garments. He shall bathe his body in water and put them on* (ibid. 16:4). Why is this holy? Well, mystery of the matter is as we have said: it is Holy of Holies, for all ascends and is crowned in Holy of Holies in a single bond. Afterward, it removes and eliminates the spirit of impurity defiling all, so that this does not rule and cannot approach the sanctuary. This disappears from all aspects of holiness, and all remains sacred in unique sanctity."[350]

Rabbi Shim'on also said, "The following verse has already been discussed: *Human and beast You deliver, O YHVH* (Psalms 36:7). Thus mystery of אדם (*adam*), *human*, ascends from the aspect of *adam*, surely; *beast* from the aspect of *beast*. So it is written: *When adam, a person, from among you brings an offering* (Leviticus 1:2)—*adam*, precisely, for this is an offering above, to bind a bond. Then, *from beasts* (ibid.), and all is included in the verse *Human and beast*. This is the mystery of why an offering requires *human and beast*, as we have said.[351]

“Come and see: When the blessed Holy One created the world, He made *human and beast* in this way. Now, you might say, ‘Look at what is written: *Let fowl fly over the earth* (Genesis 1:20), for offerings are brought of them, even ascent offerings, as is written: *If his offering is an ascent offering of birds* (Leviticus 1:14)!’ Come and see: Of all those birds, the only ones offered are *from the turtle-doves or from the young pigeons* (ibid.). This mystery is: What qualifies the one, disqualifies the other; one is right and the other left, and all is one.[352]

“עוף יעופף (*Of ye’ofef*), *Let fowl fly, over the earth*—as we have established, they are mystery of the Chariot, by whom Holy Spirit ascends, rising above; for they are two, one on the right and one on the left: *of, fowl*, on the right, namely Michael; *ye’ofef, let fly*, on the left, namely Gabriel; one on the right, the other on the left. Therefore these two are offered, to raise Holy Spirit. The left below adorns and equips that left side, and the right the right; and the Woman is joined with Her Husband, becoming one, and all ascends and is bound as one above and below, and the blessed Holy One is exalted alone and strengthened.[353]

“In books of the ancients: A poor man does not provide a nourishing portion, only joining above.’ But all, above and below, is joined, each on its side fittingly, as we have established.”[354]

Rabbi El’azar asked Rabbi Shim’on, “Surely, the bond of all is bound to the Holy of Holies, to be illumined. Joining of will of priests, Levites, and Israel above—how far does it ascend?”[355]

He replied, “As we have established, to *Ein Sof*, for all binding, union, and consummation are to be secreted in that secrecy ungrasped and unknown, containing will of all wills. *Ein Sof* is not susceptible to being known, nor does it produce end or anything, as primordial *Ayin* generates beginning and end. Who is beginning? Supernal point,

beginning of all, concealed one abiding in thought. And it produces end, called *end of the matter* (Ecclesiastes 12:13). But there, *ein sof*, no end—no wills, no lights, no lamps in that *Ein Sof*. All these lights and lamps depend upon it for their existence, yet are incapable of grasping. The one who knows and does not know is none but supernal Will, concealed of all concealed, *Ayin*. And when the supernal point and the World that is Coming ascend, they know only the aroma, as one inhaling an aroma is sweetened.[356]

"This is not pleasure, for it is written: *I will not smell your pleasing aroma* (Leviticus 26:31); for *pleasing aroma* is the aroma of aspiration of all these: aspiration of prayer, aspiration of song, and aspiration of the priest—all mystery of *adam*. Then all of them become one will, and this is called *pleasing*—רעוא (*ra'ava*), will/pleasure, according to its translation. Then all is bound and illumined as one, fittingly, as has been said.[357]

"Thus, this Other Side is delivered into the hand of the priest, as is written: *Command Aaron* [239b] *and his sons, saying* (Leviticus 6:2). A mystery here, for we have established: *Command* means nothing but idolatry, and here it was given to Aaron—to burn that evil thought, eliminating it from holiness by this ascending aspiration and by this smoke and burning fat, removing it from holiness. This *command* is under their control, to separate it from holiness through this offering.[358]

"Now, if you say, '*Command the Children of Israel* (Numbers 28:2)'—so too, it is under their control as long as they fulfill the will of their Lord, unable to dominate them.[359]

"This entire verse demonstrates mystery of the matter: to crown this Holy Spirit high above, and to separate this impure spirit, bringing it far below—one by aspiration and prayer, as we have said, and the other by action, all fittingly.[360]

"This verse proves these, as is written: *Command Aaron and his sons, saying. Command*—idolatry, impure spirit. *Saying*—woman, called *in awe of* YHVH (Proverbs 31:30); here is written *saying*, and there is written *Saying: If a man divorces his wife* (Jeremiah 3:1), as has been established. Thus, all has been said, and the priest is poised to perfect all in mystery of *human and beast*. Happy is the share of the righteous in this world and in the world that is coming, for they know the ways of Torah and follow it truthfully! Of them is written *My Lord, by these things people live* (Isaiah 38:16). What are *these things*? Ways of Torah. *People live*—enduring in this world and in the world that is coming."[361]

Come and see! It is written: *This is the teaching of the ascent offering* (Leviticus 6:2). Rabbi Ḥiyya said, "We have established *the ascent offering* as follows: *This is the teaching of*—Assembly of Israel. *The ascent offering*, for She ascends and is crowned high above, to be joined fittingly—up to the place called Holy of Holies.[362]

"Alternatively, *This is the teaching of*—Assembly of Israel. *The ascent offering*—an evil thought, mounting a person's will to divert him from the way of truth. *It is that which ascends* (Leviticus 6:2)—ascending and leading the person astray. One must burn it in fire, so as not to allow it to grow. Thus, *upon its hearth on the altar all night* (ibid.). Who is *night*? Assembly of Israel, coming to purify the person from that desire. *Upon its hearth*—for a river of fire is designated to consume all those who do not endure abidingly; they are cast into that blazing fire and their dominion is eliminated from the world. Thus in order that it not prevail, it must be *upon its hearth on the altar all night*, so it is subdued and powerless.[363]

"Thus, when this is subdued, Assembly of Israel, who is Holy Spirit, ascends, rising to be crowned above. For Her ascent transpires when this other power is subdued and separated from Her. So, in mystery of the offering, we must

separate this side from Holy Spirit and give it a portion, so that Holy Spirit may rise above.[364]

"Come and see: When the Dwelling was built, the Other Side was removed and subdued, disappearing from the world. Once it disappeared and the Dwelling was erected by Moses, it was erected above and below, as is written: וַיָּקֶם מֹשֶׁה (*Va-yaqem Mosheh*), *Moses erected, the Dwelling* (Exodus 40:18). What does *va-yaqem, erected*, mean? Well, אוֹקִים (*oqim*), he raised, it, so that it would ascend higher and higher. So, *Moses raised*—whereas it had been low, he raised it, like raising someone who has fallen.[365]

"Similarly, of the time to come is written: *I will raise the fallen booth of David* (Amos 9:11). And it is written: *Fallen, not to rise again, is Virgin Israel* (Amos 5:2). Why *not again*, which implies that at another time She did rise? Why *not again*? Well, She did rise at another time—She rose, though the blessed Holy One did not raise Her! For in the exile of Egypt the blessed Holy One raised Her, performing many miracles in order to raise Her; whereas in the exile of Babylon He did not raise Her, but She rose—and the exiles went up [to Jerusalem] as if they had no redeemer. The blessed Holy One had no desire for them, in consequence of that sin [240a] of foreign women, so He did not raise Assembly of Israel nor perform miracles and mighty deeds fittingly at that time. Therefore, it is written *not to rise again—not again*, precisely! But the blessed Holy One will raise Her, as is written: *I will raise the fallen booth of David*, and similarly, *and David their king, whom I will raise up for them* (Jeremiah 30:9). Thus, here is written *Moses raised the Dwelling*.[366]

"Come and see: When Moses erected the Dwelling, another Dwelling was erected along with it. And the supernal Dwelling established and supported all, for the supernal Dwelling is concealed and hidden high above, and the other Dwelling was erected above the Dwelling below, standing over it by the power of that highest Dwelling of all.

As the Dwelling below was erected by Moses, so too above. How do we know? As is written: *Moses erected* את (*et*) *the Dwelling—et*, precisely, indicating that two Dwellings were established by mystery of Moses."[367]

Rabbi Yose said, "*Moses erected?* But not everything was arranged yet, and there can be no erection until all is completed, member entering member. So why, *erected*?"[368]

Rabbi Yitsḥak replied, "By three aspects Moses erected the Dwelling. What is written? *Moses erected the Dwelling and placed its sockets and set up its boards* (Exodus 40:18). By these three aspects Moses erected the Dwelling, and by these three aspects the Dwelling ascended and the Other Side was subdued. So when Moses erected this side, the Other Side was subdued; therefore Moses erected it, and no one else.[369]

"Come and see: It is written *He placed its sockets* (Exodus 40:18). At that moment, Samael was jolted from his place, along with his forty chariots, and he fled four hundred parasangs into the demonic dazzle of the chasm of dust. Moses inserted those sockets, and this side was strengthened; then the sockets of the Other Side loosened and [its pillars] fell."[370]

He opened, saying, "*On that day I will raise the fallen booth of David* (Amos 9:11). What does *on that day* mean? On the day when the blessed Holy One will execute judgment upon the world and requite the wicked of the world according to their deeds. For Assembly of Israel cannot rise from the dust as long as the wicked of Israel stand in the world. What is written previously? *All the sinners of My people will die by the sword—who say, 'Evil will not overtake or confront us'* (ibid., 10). And following this is written *On that day I will raise the fallen booth of David*.[371]

"This verse should be contemplated. *I will repair their breaches* (Amos 9:11); this should read *her breaches. And his ruins* (ibid.); this should read *her ruins*. However, *I will*

repair their breaches. Whose? Of the wicked, as is written: *All the sinners of My people will die by the sword*—for then breaches will be made in Israel. So, *I will repair their breaches*.[372]

"*And raise up his ruins* (ibid.). Whose? David's. For when the wicked kingdom is strengthened in the world, then this Holy Kingdom is weakened and its structure is destroyed. So, *and raise up his ruins*. For we have learned: As long as one is strengthened, the other is weakened; this one is full, and that one is desolate. So until that day, the wicked kingdom remains strong; on that day, this Holy Kingdom will be strengthened and the blessed Holy One will raise it. Thus, *and raise up his ruins*.[373]

"*And rebuild her as in days of old* (Amos 9:11). What does this mean? Corresponding to what is written: *The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun…* (Isaiah 30:26).[374]

"*Moses erected the Dwelling* (Exodus 40:18). How did he erect it? As is written: *He placed its sockets*—he placed those sockets underneath, on which [the boards] stood, and in which hinges of the doors revolved, for those sockets underneath enable revolving.[375]

"Why *he conveyed*? He arranged and strengthened them potently. At that moment, the other sockets—of the Other Side—were eliminated.[376]

"Similarly, it is written: *Remember, O YHVH, the Edomites, on the day of Jerusalem, saying: 'Raze it, raze it to its foundation!'* (Psalms 137:7). So, the blessed Holy One will one day build the foundations of Jerusalem out of another element that will prevail against all. What is that? Sapphire, as is written: *I will lay your foundations with sapphires* (Isaiah 54:11), for these are supernal, mighty foundations and supports, without any weakness like the first ones. How so? Over the former stones [240b] of the foundations, other nations could prevail. Why? Because

they lacked suitable supernal radiance. But these will shine with supernal radiance and be embedded in the abyss, so that no one can overpower them. These are sapphires that will shine above and below, for at that time supernal radiance will increase above and below.[377]

"Now, if you say, 'Those former foundations will be nullified,' look at what is written: *Behold, I will set your stones* בפוך (*ba-pukh*), *with antimony* (Isaiah 54:11)! *Will set*—mending what is broken. What is *ba-pukh*? As is said: *She painted her eyes ba-pukh, with kohl* (2 Kings 9:30)—there are stones called *pukh*. Why this?"[378]

Rabbi El'azar said, "It is secret—a secret transmitted to the Reapers of the Field.[379]

"Come and see: Heaven forbid that those foundation stones of Zion and Jerusalem ever fell into the power of other nations or were burned by them. They were not burned, but rather all hidden away, treasured by the blessed Holy One. All those foundations of the holy House were treasured away—not even one of them was lost. And when the blessed Holy One will once again establish Jerusalem in its place, those original stones will return to their positions. No other eye will be empowered to see them except when a person paints his eyes with that *pukh*, antimony, filling his eyes with it. He will then see all the stones and foundations of Jerusalem arranged in place, not dominated by other nations, and all other precious stones and stone buildings standing erect.[380]

"Then, *For eye-to-eye they will see* בשוב יהוה ציון (*be-shuv YHVH tsiyyon*), *as YHVH returns to Zion* (Isaiah 52:8). What does this mean: *be-shuv YHVH, as YHVH returns*? Well, when other nations ruled over her, the blessed Holy One raised her above; but at that time He will return her to her place, as is written: *be-shuv YHVH tsiyyon, as YHVH returns Zion—as YHVH returns*, surely![381]

"Come and see: Anything concealed from the eye, which the eye is not empowered to see, cannot be apprehended

by the eye except by applying a certain substance to the eye: kohl. Thus, *Behold, I will set your stones with pukh, antimony* (Isaiah 54:11).[382]

"Come and see: All those stones will occupy their positions, forming foundations as before, and other foundations—of sapphire—will occupy other places around them, widthwise and lengthwise, as is written: *I will lay your foundations with sapphires*.[383]

"Of the time when the blessed Holy One will erect His House, what is written? *He will swallow up death forever* (Isaiah 25:8). *He will swallow up*—as is written: *YHVH has swallowed up without pity* (Lamentations 2:2). The cup drunk by one will be drunk by the other.[384]

"Now, you might say, 'That prediction *He will swallow up* applies only for a certain fixed time—like Israel.' Not so! It is written *forever*. What does this mean? For generations upon generations. Not like Israel, and not like that time when Moses erected the Dwelling; rather, the blessed Holy One will raise Assembly of Israel and set up pillars and pegs and all the ceilings of the House firmly forever and ever. For the Other Side will be swallowed up, never to rise again, and then, *The disgrace of His people He will remove from all the earth—for YHVH has spoken* (Isaiah 25:8).[385]

"*Moses erected the Dwelling* (Exodus 40:18). At the time when these sockets were set up and put in place, the sockets of the Other Side were loosened and removed from their places. Thus, ויתן (*va-yitten*), *He conveyed, its sockets* (ibid.). Why *va-yitten, he conveyed*? Well, we have learned that Moses saw wicked Samael coming right toward him to accuse him. Then Moses seized him and bound him, and he erected it and set its sockets, as is written: *va-yitten, He conveyed, its sockets*—conveying forcefully—for no other human could overpower him and set the sockets in place except for Moses, who erected it so potently.[386]

"The day that the Dwelling was erected, when Moses began erecting it, was the first of Nisan. And that is the

time when the power of the Other Side prevails in the world, for in the days of Nisan, as we have learned, the ox's head is in a basket. In Nisan Moses began, and he saw Samael walking around him to confuse him. Moses overpowered him, and then he placed its sockets. He began, placing below; and the one beginning began, placing [241a] above—one corresponding to the other. On the day that this one was erected, another holy one was erected above; and a higher Dwelling, concealed and hidden, radiated lights in every direction, and worlds were illumined."[387]

Rabbi Yose asked Rabbi Shim'on, "We have learned that we see three Dwellings in a verse: *On the day the Dwelling was erected, the cloud covered the Dwelling…, and in the evening it remained over the Dwelling* (Numbers 9:15). Look, three Dwellings here! Why a Dwelling and not a House, since a House is required, not a Dwelling?"[388]

He opened, saying, "*Thus says YHVH, The heaven is My throne* [*and the earth is My footstool. Where is the house You will build for Me? And where is My resting place?*] (Isaiah 66:1). Come and see: The blessed Holy One delighted in Israel as His inheritance and share, and drew them close to Him. As we have established, He formed them into certain rungs in this world, corresponding to the pattern above, so as to complete all the worlds as one, above and below, as is written: *The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool*—to complete above and below, becoming one.[389]

"Alternatively, *The heaven is My throne*—the firmament in which Jacob dwells, who is the supernal image for the holy Throne. *And the earth is My footstool*—the firmament in which King David dwells, basking in the splendor of the resplendent speculum.[390]

"Since He wished to extend further below, He said *Where is the house You will build for Me*?—the building of

the Temple. *And where is My resting place*?—the Holy of Holies below.[391]

"But come and see: The whole time that Israel journeyed in the desert, they had a Dwelling, until they came to Shiloh, where it remained. This is the mystery of continuing one to the other, conveying one into the other, linking one another so as to illumine—but not for rest. For there was no rest until the Temple was built in the days of King Solomon; then there was rest above and below, for there rest was embedded—no more journeying from place to place.[392]

"So there is a Dwelling, and there is a House. A Dwelling, as is said: *I will place My Dwelling in your midst, and My soul will not loathe you* (Leviticus 26:11). Why *My Dwelling*? The dwelling-places of the blessed Holy One will be near Israel. Why? Because it is written *My soul will not loathe you*.[393]

"What is the difference between one and the other? Well, a Dwelling is like when a king comes to his friend's house and does not bring all his troops with him; so as not to trouble him, he comes with just a few soldiers. A House—all his soldiers and all his troops accompany him to stay in that house. This is the difference between a Dwelling and a House.

"The Temple is an eternal resting place, with all those chariots, with all those forms, with all those works, corresponding to the pattern above—to join works below, corresponding above. The Dwelling—with a few forms, a few works, so that it could journey from place to place. All in mystery above.[394]

"Come and see: When the blessed Holy One commanded Moses concerning the Dwelling, he could not comprehend it until the blessed Holy One showed him the design of each and every element. How did He display it to him? In white fire, in black fire, in red fire, and in green fire. What is

written? *See, and make it by their pattern* [*that you are shown on the mountain*] (Exodus 25:40). Even so, it was difficult for Moses.[395]

"Come and see: Although He showed him eye-to-eye, Moses did not want to make it. Now, if you say that he did not know how to make it or that he lacked wisdom—come and see! What is written of Bezalel and Oholiab and all those others, even though they did not see what Moses saw? *Moses saw all the work, and look, they had done it* [*as YHVH had commanded*] (Exodus 39:43). If those, who had not seen, did so, then Moses, who saw, how much more so! However, although Moses withdrew from the work of the Sanctuary, all was done by him and it was named for him: *See, and make it*.[396]

"Alternatively, Moses withdrew from this and gave his place to another; so the blessed Holy One said to him, [241b] *See, I have called by name Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur… and with him Oholiab* (Exodus 31:2, 6). And it is written: *Bezalel and Oholiab shall do*… (ibid. 36:1). If this honor was reserved for Moses, for him to fashion it, this should have remained with him permanently. Even so, since he gave the orders and the work was done by his command, he did it all![397]

"Furthermore, all work endures only when completed. Thus, *Moses erected the Dwelling* (Exodus 40:18). All those wise-hearted ones wanted to erect it, but it did not stand, in honor of Moses—until Moses came and erected it, as we have established."[398]

Rabbi Yehudah opened, saying, "*Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy! Though I have fallen, I rise* (Micah 7:8). Who is *my enemy*? Enmity of the wicked kingdom against the Holy Kingdom. This verse was uttered by Assembly of Israel: *Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy! Though I have fallen, I rise*—which is not so with her, for once she falls she will never rise. But although Assembly of Israel has fallen, She

will rise, as She has risen other times, as is written: *Though I have fallen, I rise; though I sit in darkness, YHVH is my light*.[399]

"For many times Assembly of Israel has fallen into exile and dwelled among enemies. All other nations rose against Israel to exterminate them from the world, but they could not, as is written: *Against Your people they devise cunning counsel… For they have conspired with a single heart, against You they sealed a pact* (Psalms 83:4, 6). Even so, although other nations rose against them, the blessed Holy One did not abandon them in their hands, and if they fell, they rose, as is written: *Though I have fallen, I rise*, for the blessed Holy One always raises Her.[400]

"In the time when the blessed Holy One will raise Her from the dust of exile and She will ascend, Assembly of Israel will say, *Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy! Though I have fallen, I rise*—though I have fallen into exile and they have subjugated Me, now *I rise*. Thus, when Moses brought Israel out [of Egypt], when the blessed Holy One performed for them those miracles and mighty deeds, then it is written: *Moses erected the Dwelling* (Exodus 40:18), for it is always raised by Moses."[401]

Rabbi Shim'on opened, saying, "*When they moved they moved, and when they stood they stood, and when they rose off the ground the wheels rose alongside them—for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels* (Ezekiel 1:21). *When they moved, they moved; and when they stood, they stood*. This verse should be contemplated. *When they moved, they moved*—don't we know that *when they moved, they moved; and when they stood, they stood*? But when who moved? When the living beings moved, for when they move, the wheels move, as is said: *When the living beings moved, the wheels moved beside them* (ibid., 19). So, *when they moved they moved, and when they stood they stood*, for all movements of those wheels are induced by movements of the living beings; and as for their standing—

they stand in place only by being totally dependent on the living beings. Similarly it is written: *And when the living beings rose off the ground, the wheels rose alongside them* (ibid.), for the living beings and the wheels move as one.[402]

"Come and see: Twenty-four lookout windows of the supernal watches are situated within one window on the east side. This opening is guarded by twenty-four watches, who are concealed in the intensity of flame encircling and revolving inside that window on the east side.[403]

"Below them are twenty-four pedestals, and upon these pedestals stand twenty-four pillars. These stand perpetually, not flying through the air like those others; these are called *standing ones*, as is said: *I will let you move about among these standing ones* (Zechariah 3:7). These *standing ones* stand upon those pedestals, revolving, remaining in place.[404]

"While these stand erect, all those rulers standing above them soar and fly through the whole world, eyes surveying. Those listening to voices raise words above, as is said: *For a bird of heaven will carry the voice* (Ecclesiastes 10:20). So, those pedestals stand firm perpetually.[405]

"Come and see: *When these moved, those moved*, as we have said; *and when these rose off the ground, the wheels rose* [242a] *alongside them*, for as these living beings move or ascend, so do they. Why? Because *the spirit of the living being was in the wheels* (Ezekiel 1:21). *The spirit of the living being*—Holy Spirit, blowing and striking all those wheels to make them move. Thus, whoever is on a high rung carries whoever carries him. Come and see, for the ark carried whoever carried it; here too, the living beings carry the wheels.[406]

"Now, you might say, 'It is written: *For the spirit of the living being was in the wheels* (Ezekiel 1:21)!' Well, this is the *living being* on the right side, on the left side, in front, and in back. This is a *living being*, while those are *living beings*.[407]

“It is written: *She is the living being that I saw beneath the God of Israel by the river Kevar* (Ezekiel 10:20). This is the one who crouches in four directions of the world; this is the one who constitutes a throne for the image of *adam*, a human, as is written: *upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of adam, a human being, upon it above* (ibid. 1:26). All for that supernal, holy, concealed rung called *God of Israel*.[408]

“This is the *living being* below, standing beneath all those supernal holy living beings. For there are higher living beings, these above those. The Throne beneath *the God of Israel* is the image of Jacob, while the Throne below is the image of David, the one crouching in four directions of the world.[409]

“Thus, a spirit issues from above and flows from rung to rung, until striking all of them below. That spirit conducts all, and harmonizes all of them perfectly. In exactly the same manner, it was arranged below. What is written above? *For the spirit of the living being was in the wheels* (Ezekiel 1:21). And it is written: *Wherever the spirit would go, they went* (ibid., 12). Below, what is written? *Moses erected the Dwelling* (Exodus 40:18). How? By becoming spirit of that rung below, in the image of that spirit above—*She is the living being that I saw beneath the God of Israel* (Ezekiel 10:20). From this *living being* issues a spirit to arrange all. So too, Moses—*That is the living being* who conveyed spirit below to arrange all, for it is written: *He erected, he placed, he set up* (Exodus 40:18), infusing spirit in everything to perfect all.[410]

“Come and see: At first, in the Dwelling that Moses made, he arranged it in mystery of the supernal rung on which he stood. In the Temple that Solomon built, he arranged it in mystery of that river issuing from Eden, which is peace of the house and its tranquil gratification. So, in mystery of the Dwelling there is closeness of love on the rung of the body, the rung on which Moses stood—

closeness of love, not gratification. When Solomon came and established the Temple, that Temple was established in mystery of satisfied love. Thus of Solomon is written *He will be a man of calm* (1 Chronicles 22:9).[411]

"So, this was arranged by one rung, and that by another rung, the image of one in the other. This mystery is: *These are the generations of Jacob: Joseph* (Genesis 37:2).[412]

"The beginning that Moses undertook, restoring this place that is side of holiness: he elevated the point standing in the middle, which was darkened and sunken in its location, invisible, not shining at all. First of all, he raised this point that was sunken in its place, and then all the rest, construction of this point. If this point is not established first, everything extending from it cannot be configured. Once this point is established and illumined, then every other arrangement can be composed, settling in place. Thus, *Moses erected* את (*et*) *the Dwelling* (Exodus 40:18)—*et* is the point, which was darkened and sunken in its place. Then, *he placed its sockets* (ibid.)—sockets on this side and that. For there are sockets, and then there are sockets, and all of them amounted to a hundred, each distributed to its place, as is written: *a hundred sockets for a hundred talents, a talent for a socket* (ibid. 38:27).[413]

"These sockets, [242b] as we have established; but it is not written that they were erected, rather ויתן (*va-yitten*), *he conveyed* (Exodus 40:18)—'giving,' placing upon them what was needed, for there are lower entities and higher entities, riding one upon the other. So of them, 'giving' is written.[414]

"When this point was erected, the Other Side sank—not totally obliterated, for that will not happen until the time to come, when it will be obliterated from the world, as has been said. One was erected, the other sank.[415]

"*He conveyed its sockets* (Exodus 40:18)—then this side of holiness began to strengthen. When these sockets were conveyed, all those of the Other Side sank, entering the

hollow of the great abyss; for this side of supernal holiness ascended, being the portion worthy to ascend, and so this Other Side sank, entering that chasm of the abyss.[416]

"If the people of Israel had not sinned at first, he could not have prevailed in the world any longer. Afterward too they sinned, drawing him upon themselves as before. Ever since that day, the only advice was to give a portion of everything to that Other Side, in mystery of offerings, sacrifices, and ascent offerings. Come and see: Therefore the ascent offering is completely consumed by fire, to subdue this side and elevate the side of holiness. Thus, when Moses erected this place, the other one sank.[417]

"Come and see: *Moses erected* this side of holiness, and the Other Side—of impurity—sank. *He conveyed* to this side of holiness, and the impure Other Side weakened. *He set up* this side of holiness, and this Other Side—of impurity—was subdued. Then *he inserted its bars*, and then *he erected* (Exodus 40:18). Why? So that beginning and end would be erection. He began with erecting and concluded with erecting, because beginning and end entirely demand erection. Beginning, so that the Other Side is weakened, thereby erecting the side of holiness, so that it may endure and rise above, becoming a single bond fittingly. For whenever holiness ascends, impurity sinks low.[418]

"The head of the point standing beneath the rungs of the Other Side is head of the outside rung, head of the male, astride a certain camel—head of confusion of darkness, spreading. For when smoke issues from fierce wrath, that smoke spreads, wrath after wrath, one upon another, one riding and ruling the other, appearing as male and female, becoming all a furious wrath. As smoke begins to spread, it pushes from within the wrath through the pressure of one point, spreading. Then, the smoke of wrath spreads twistingly, like a serpent skilled in doing evil.[419]

“The head emerging to spread is a dark rung, ascending and descending, roaming about, and resting in its place. The rung endures, settling, out of that smoke issuing from wrath. It is ‘shadow,’ a shadow over another place called ‘death,’ and when the two of them join as one, it is called ‘shadow of death.’ As we have established, they are two rungs joining as one.[420]

“This shadow is beginning of the lower point outside, dark, far removed from the holy point existing in the middle. This is a point that does not exist and is not distinguished by color; from it spreads an expansion outward, downward—and it sinks, unseen, unmarked. This spreads below, to the right and to the left, expanding in the middle within dense darkness—one thousand one hundred thick cords engraved on this side and on that.[421]

“The darkness spreads in a color black and not black, for it has no color in which to endure. Within that expansion exist darknesses—those that functioned in Egypt, as is written: *No one saw his fellow*… (Exodus 10:23), and it is written: *a darkness one can feel* (ibid., 21).[422] [243a]

“This expansion spreads in numerous different ways, one within the other. Within this expansion issues a radiance colored gold, a reddish gold. This radiance spreads and covers the darkness of the head; it is a gold in which darkness is included. This darkness spreads to the right and to the left, and from within these two sides emerges a color of silver that does not shine. This silver color spreads and covers the darkness, and they intermingle, descending.[423]

“The darkness spreads, and two darknesses stand out: a black head of pillars, from which spreads and emerges a color of bronze, from which that darkness spreads below and stands firm; and a black color emerges, looking like iron, all in mystery of darkness.[424]

“Between two pillars emerges one pillar, darkened in darkness, in which all these colors appear. This is foreskin,

leading the male to the female, to couple together, becoming one. This is a pillar of seven known rungs.[425]

"First rung, a rung standing in the realm of this darkness. This darkness ascends into secrecy of smoke of the fire—comprised of the color of smoke, the color of fire, the color of black. These three colors separate in various directions, twisting in perversities of the world.[426]

"Color of smoke: this descends into the world, entering various aspects. This spreads through the world, misleading human spirits with anger, to pervert their ways and be strengthened by their anger. Of this is written *There shall be no foreign god in you, nor shall you bow down to an alien god* (Psalms 81:10). *There shall be no foreign god in you*—the male. *Nor shall you bow down to an alien god*—the female. This is anger—ruling and gathering strength in the world, entering human beings and emboldening them to do evil.[427]

"Color of fire: this color descends into the world, entering various aspects to do evil, kill, and shed blood, and to overpower people. Of this is written *If they say, 'Come with us! Let us lie in wait for blood, let us lurk for the innocent, without cause!'* (Proverbs 1:11). For there are those who shed blood and kill without cause, and there are those who shed blood and kill in war—one from the male side, the other from the female side. The male side sheds blood without cause, as we have said; the female side, to wage war, killing one another—all wars and mutual killing derive from that female side.[428]

"Color of black: this color descends into the world, descending to be appointed over all wounds and blows, capturing bodies, crucifying, and strangling—harming people constantly.

"These three colors separate in the various directions of the world, spreading among the world's inhabitants. The color of smoke descends into the world, and this is the first rung emerging from the sunken point, from that shadow we

have mentioned—which is Samael, who is riding a camel, as has been said. And this color of smoke is called Prince Katzpiel, and this is the anger of human beings, who harden their hearts with anger.[429]

"Below this are appointed one thousand six hundred ravaging bands, who are anger of human bodies. For there is an anger ruling in the world to execute judgment, but this is an anger that rules and enters human bodies and they become enraged by this anger. This anger forms the foundation of all other types, by which a malevolent structure is erected; for this smoke issues from the anger of supernal flaming fire, and it is the first of that fire.[430]

"Four angers branch out from this anger. The first is called Anger, and this is what angers human hearts, descending and misleading people, who become enraged. This is what draws the Destroyer upon the world. Of this is written *In anger may You remember compassion* (Habakkuk 3:2).[431]

"The second anger: this one descends into the world, roams, and spreads in all directions, and it is called Hatred. This descends and enters human beings, and once it has entered it is called Silent Destroyer. [243b] This is anger that remains silent, and that collaborates with the place of the female. This is silent anger, contorted. This is severest of all, for it resembles a serpent, who is always silent and then kills.[432]

"The third anger: this is an anger opposite to the preceding—becoming stronger, not silent. Rather, this anger reveals itself; and the more it reveals and is not silent, the more it is broken, and this is called Broken Anger.[433]

"The fourth anger: in the beginning, strong; at the end, broken. So this is an anger opposite to the preceding; this is the most broken aspect of all. Thus, all is on the first rung.[434]

“Second rung: a rung emerging from darkness, and this is a dark color arising out of darkness, for all arises out of darkness and stands on known rungs. This extends below in known colors.[435]

“On this rung stand three hundred aspects, distinct from one another, yet all absorbed within each other. Although different from one another and scattering from one another, all are absorbed within each other. Thus, all known rungs on this side are malevolent.

“From here emerge all these destroyers who roam the world, executing judgment openly for concealed deeds done in darkness secretly; they roam the world and carry out judgment for them openly. Thus, all these roaming the world and openly executing judgment confront human beings, always readying themselves for those concealed sins that we have mentioned. And those who are called Wrath and Fury join them, executing judgment upon humans. This is done in the world by these masters of judgment, as we have said.[436]

“This rung stands in darkness and fire, which form a single mystery, and from this rung diverge various fierce mighty ones, standing beneath an aspect of one firmament called the Black Firmament. This is the firmament spreading over all those rungs that are red as a rose, and these are called ‘arms’ of this side.[437]

“Beneath these, rungs extend downward until reaching the third rung, for those on the second rung emerge from that Black Firmament and roam through the world, some on the right and some on the left. Those of the right diverge in three directions, which are three joints; and those of the left diverge in three directions, which are three other joints.[438]

“The first joint stands above, and dark smoke in anger is joined to it. This joint includes three dark colors, different from each other yet intermingling. This joint is bent, though not subdued except at certain times. This is called

Unabated Rage, since it does not abate except when Israel brings an offering below; for at that time this anger abates—subdued below, its power weakened—and it cannot rule or overwhelm. When this is weakened the second joint, in the middle, cannot move or conduct.[439]

"This joint is called Ire. This is the second joint, a joint moving from place to place, conducting all other joints, which are all controlled by it and all empowered by that joint. This is the one who conveys all suffering into the world, for when it joins another rung, embracing the female, all sufferings, distress, and anguish descend upon the world, for one cannot rule without the other. All those rungs have been given to the female to rule and mislead the world; yet if one does not ride upon the other, joining one another, they cannot rule.[440]

"Come and see: When Adam was in the Garden of Eden, engaged in the service of his Master, Samael descended with all [244a] his rungs, and he was riding on that evil serpent to mislead them. For that serpent beneath him is tortuous so as to mislead human beings and seduce them, as is written: *For the lips of an alien woman drip honey, and her palate is smoother than oil* (Proverbs 5:3). So one provides power, and the other performs its craft in the world, and without one another they cannot prevail.[441]

"Thus, when that middle joint joins the female, judgments and every distress descend upon the world. And when this separates, not moving, all is broken and subdued, unable to dominate. So all is broken and subdued by mystery of the offerings below, and the one who ascends, ascends to be crowned above and to be blessed from the supernal depth illumining all faces.[442]

"The third joint: this one is extremely strong, and it is called Trouble, for from this one emerges the power to shower distress and bring trouble upon human beings.[443]

"The mystery of these three joints is as written: *rage, ire, and trouble* (Psalms 78:49)—three joints of the right. As

for three joints of the left, when they gather strength as one, that left is called *cohort of evil messengers* (ibid.), for from this left all those evil angels are sent below, drawing power—those emerging from the side below, as we have said. All this, from the second rung and the third rung.[444]

"Fourth rung: this rung arises from contortion of anger, and it is called Middle One, for it is the torso between two arms. Here is a flame blazing with redness like a rose. From here emerges potency, descending below to be empowered to shed blood, for this is the one who grants authority and dominion below to be empowered and shed blood. This flows to the female, one needing the other, as the body needs the soul, and the soul cannot perform its craft except through the body. Thus, all force and all potency issue from here, becoming empowered to perform their craft in the world malevolently, as a female receiving from the male continually.[445]

"On every single rung and in every single joint are many princes and many ravaging bands of stingers, all controlled by them. All those controlled by them are below, among the forces of the female, and each has a specific rung controlling it. Just as the holy supernal side has certain palaces facing the supernal rungs, comprised within one another, so too below, conversely, on the Other Side are rungs facing those palaces of the female, comprised within one another.[446]

"On this fourth rung stand evil judgments, poised to descend and be transmitted to those who execute evil, fierce judgment. From here they absorb their potency, to be empowered and to complete the judgment that they execute. Therefore all these rungs include all those lower palaces on the female side below. Happy is the share of the righteous, who veer away from this path and follow the awe of the blessed Holy One, sanctifying themselves with the holiness of their Lord! Happy are they in this world and in the world that is coming!

“Fifth rung: this rung is divided into two rungs, right and left, and these are called Thighs, joining forces to inflict evil and pursue; for here lies potent pursuit of all illnesses and evils pursuing the wicked. And when this rung approaches, *the runners went out in haste* (Esther 3:15); those *runners* are below, running to inflict evil—and they are all called ‘pursuers,’ of whom is written *Our pursuers were swifter than eagles in the sky* (Lamentations 4:19).[447]

“This rung is divided into two sides, right and left. There are three joints on the right and three joints on the left. These joints, and the joints that we have mentioned, all look backward, for those supernal holy joints [244b] all look inward toward the body, as is said: *all their hinder parts inward* (1 Kings 7:25), whereas these all look backward.[448]

“What is the difference between them? Well, the supernal joints are all in mystery of *adam*, *human*, and since all is in mystery of *adam*, it is written *all their hinder parts inward*. As for these other joints that we have mentioned, those joints in the middle all look backward; these are in mystery of beast, and so *all their hinder parts* are backward. This mystery is as we have established, for it is written: *Human and beast You deliver, O YHVH* (Psalms 36:7)—one on the side of *human*, and one on the side of animal, and thus the offering ascends: *human and beast*.[449]

“The first joint: in it exists a color of darkness within demonic dazzle of dense fog, growing under a curse beneath a stone lying upon it, not growing. This looms over the worthy who have merits but lack ancestral merit by which to be fortified and defended.[450]

“The other joints pursue the wicked who have previously perverted their way, pursuing them and all those who can be recognized by a visible mark. For an angel, a holy messenger from the side of *Gevurah*, descends and puts a mark on all those deserving punishment. That mark is recognized above by all those masters of judgment, and since it is, whoever deserves disease is struck by disease;

whoever deserves pain or other punishments—they see everything in that mark.[451]

"Therefore, all those joints face backward, and they kick those who kick their Master and all those who deserve to be kicked. Except for the righteous and the pious who are pursued by disease, for these do not dominate them, and diseases do not come upon them from this side.[452]

"Now, you might ask, 'From where do diseases come upon them?' Come and see! It is written: *YHVH delights in crushing him by disease* (Isaiah 53:10). *YHVH delights*—He delights in striking him and afflicting him with disease, and not striking anyone else, and not from the Other Side. These are called 'chastenings of love,' and all attains holy equilibrium.[453]

"Sixth rung: this is called Foreskin. This and all those lower rungs below are all called Foreskin, for they suck from this side. This is within mystery of *the elusive snake*, and this suckles *the writhing snake* (Isaiah 27:1). And all those rungs linked to this side are called 'unripe fruit of foreskin.' All proceeds in a single mystery.[454]

"Come and see: Consequently, a spirit from the side of this Foreskin settles upon all those trees planted in the earth, until they are well rooted. Thus it is written: *You shall treat its foreskin with its fruit as foreskin. Three years* [*it shall be foreskin to you; it shall not be eaten*] (Leviticus 19:23). For the blessed Holy One feels love constantly for Israel, and keeps them far away from all evil paths and evil, impure sides, so that they may cleave to the side of holiness. Happy are they in this world and in the world that is coming!"[455]

REFERENCE MATTER

Abbreviations

ABD	David Noel Freedman, ed., *Anchor Bible Dictionary*
add.	addendum
Add.	Additional
Arukh	Nathan ben Yeḥiel of Rome, *Sefer he-Arukh*
Arukh ha-Shalem	Nathan ben Yeḥiel of Rome, *Arukh ha-Shalem*
Battei Midrashot	Shlomo Aharon Wertheimer, ed., *Battei Midrashot*
B.C.E.	before the Common Era
Beit ha-Midrash	Adolph Jellinek, ed., *Beit ha-Midrash*
BT	Babylonian Talmud
C9	MS Add. 1023, University Library, Cambridge
C.E.	Common Era
Cremona	Cremona edition of the *Zohar*
Derekh Emet	*Derekh Emet*, in *Sefer ha-Zohar*, ed. Reuven Margaliot
Derekh Emet (ed. Ḥamiẓ)	Joseph Ḥamiẓ, ed., *Derekh Emet*
diss.	dissertation
ed.	editor (plural, eds.); edition; edited by
Edri	Yehuda Edri, trans., *Sefer ha-Zohar*
esp.	especially

fasc.	fascicle
frag.	fragmentary
Haggahot Maharḥu	Ḥayyim Vital, *Haggahot Maharḥu*
Hash	*Hashmatot*
Heikh	*Heikhalot*
intro	introduction
IR	*Idra Rabba*
IZ	*Idra Zuta*
J3	MS Heb. 8° 490, Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem
JT	Jerusalem Talmud
M	Mishnah
M5	MS Hebr. 20, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
M9	MS Hebr. 219, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
Ma’arikh	Menaḥem ben Judah de Lonzano, *Sefer ha-Ma’arikh*
Mantua	Mantua edition of the *Zohar*
Mat	*Matnitin*
Matoq mi-Devash	Daniel Frisch, *Peirush Matoq mi-Devash*
MhN	*Midrash ha-Ne’lam*
Miqdash Melekh	Shalom Buzaglo, *Miqdash Melekh*
MS	manuscript
Ms5	MS Guenzburg 293, Russian State Library, Moscow
Ms24	MS Guenzburg 1624, Russian State Library, Moscow
n. (plural, nn.)	note(s)

N10	MS 1660, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York
N41	MS 1930, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York
n.d.	no date
Nefesh David	David Luria, *Nefesh David*
Nitsotsei Orot	Ḥayyim Joseph David Azulai, *Nitsotsei Orot*
Nitsotsei Zohar	Reuven Margaliot, *Nitsotsei Zohar*
n.p.	no publisher
O2	MS 1564, Bodleian Library, Oxford
O17	MS 2514, Bodleian Library, Oxford
Or Yaqar	Moses Cordovero, *Or Yaqar*
P2	MS héb. 779, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris
P19	MS héb. 853, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris
par.	paragraph
Piq	*Piqqudin*
QhM	*Qav ha-Middah*
R1	MS 2971, Biblioteca Casanatense, Rome
RM	*Ra'aya Meheimna*
RR	*Raza de-Razin*
Scholem	Gershom Scholem, *Sefer ha-Zohar shel Gershom Scholem*
SdTs	*Sifra di-Tsni'uta*
ShS	*Shir ha-Shirim*
SO	*Sitrei Otiyyot*
Soncino	Harry Sperling et al., trans., *The Zohar* (Soncino Press)
ST	*Sitrei Torah*
Sullam	Yehudah Ashlag, *Sefer ha-Zohar…im… ha-Sullam*

T1	MS Friedberg 5–015, University of Toronto Library
Tiq	*Tiqqunim* (in *Zohar Ḥadash*)
Tos	*Tosefta*
trans.	translator(s); translated by
TZ	*Tiqqunei ha-Zohar*
V4	MS ebr. 200, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V5	MS ebr. 206, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V7	MS ebr. 208, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V16	MS Neofiti 23, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V18	MS Neofiti 25, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
V20	MS ebr. 606, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican
Vital	Ḥayyim Vital, in *Or ha-Ḥammah*, ed. Abraham Azulai
Yahel Or	Elijah ben Solomon of Vilna, *Yahel Or*
Zacuto	Moses Zacuto, in *Miqdash Melekh*
ZḤ	*Zohar Ḥadash*
Zohorei Ya'bets	Jacob Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets*

Transliteration of Hebrew and Aramaic

א	*alef*	’[1]	ל	*lamed*	*l*
בּ	*bet*	*b*	מ	*mem*	*m*
ב	*vet*	*v*	נ	*nun*	*n*
ג	*gimel*	*g*	ס	*samekh*	*s*
ד	*dalet*	*d*	ע	*ayin*	’[2]
ה	*he*	*h*	פּ	*pe*	*p*
ו	*vav*	*v*	פ	*phe*	*f*[3]
ז	*zayin*	*z*	צ	*tsadi*	*ts*
ח	*ḥet*	*ḥ*	ק	*qof*	*q*
ט	*tet*	*t*	ר	*resh*	*r*
י	*yod*	*y, i*	שׁ	*shin*	*sh*
כּ	*kaf*	*k*	שׂ	*sin*	*s*
כ	*khaf*	*kh*	ת	*tav*	*t*

The English equivalent letter is doubled when a strong *dagesh* in Hebrew or Aramaic characterizes a verbal conjugation or indicates an assimilated letter, e.g., *dibber, yitten*. However, if the Hebrew letter (in which a *dagesh* appears) is represented by two English letters (such as *sh* or *ts*), then that English equivalent is not doubled, e.g., *va-yishaqehu, matsot*. Further, a single English equivalent letter is not doubled when preceded by a hyphenated prefix, e.g., *ha-sefer, la-melekh, mi-tokh*.

Proper names that appear in roman type do not follow the above schema. Biblical names are rendered according to the *JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh*. Rabbinic names are rendered according to common convention, e.g., Akiva,

Resh Lakish. Medieval names are Anglicized, e.g., Moses de León, Joseph Gikatilla. Authors' names in the Bibliography follow library listings or the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*.

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1. *Alef* is not transliterated at the beginning or end of a word nor after a hyphenated prefix. Elsewhere it is transliterated only when accompanied by a vowel, e.g., *Shemu'el*.

2. *Ayin* is not transliterated at the beginning of a word, nor after a hyphenated prefix, nor, unless accompanied by a vowel, at the end of a word. Thus, *Shema*, but *Bava Metsi'a*.

3. Occasionally transliterated as *ph* to compare or contrast it to the letter *pe*.

Glossary

alef The first letter of the Hebrew alphabet; the beginning of divine and human speech.

Amidah "Standing"; the central prayer, recited three times daily.

Assembly of Israel Hebrew, כנסת ישראל (*Keneset Yisra'el*); in rabbinic literature, a phrase normally denoting the people of Israel. In the *Zohar*, the phrase can refer to the earthly community of Israel but also (often primarily) to *Shekhinah*, the divine feminine counterpart of the people.

Ayin "Nothingness"; the creative "no-thingness" of God, out of which all being emanates.

Binah "Understanding"; the third *sefirah*; the Divine Mother who gives birth to the seven lower *sefirot*.

blessed Holy One Common rabbinic name for God. In the *Zohar* it often designates *Tif'eret*.

Da'at "Knowledge"; the hidden *sefirah* mediating between *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*.

Din "Judgment"; the fifth *sefirah*; the left arm of the divine body, balancing *Ḥesed*. The roots of evil lie here; also called *Gevurah*.

Dwelling Hebrew, משכן (*mishkan*). The portable sanctuary (or Tabernacle), which according to Exodus was constructed by Moses and the Israelites, and then carried from encampment to encampment as the people journeyed through the Sinai Desert. In the *Zohar*, often a symbol of *Shekhinah*.

Eikhah The book of Lamentations.

Ein Sof "There is no end"; that which is boundless; the Infinite. The ultimate reality of God beyond all specific qualities of the *sefirot*; the God beyond God.

Elohim "God, gods"; a biblical name for God. In the *Zohar* it has various sefirotic associations: *Binah, Gevurah, Shekhinah*.

Gedullah "Greatness"; the fourth *sefirah*; the outpouring of God's great goodness; also called *Ḥesed*.

Gevurah "Power"; the fifth *sefirah*; also called *Din*.

gimatriyya Derived from the Greek *geometria* ("measuring the earth"); a method of interpretation based on the numerical value of Hebrew letters.

Hashmatot "Omissions"; additions printed at the end of the first of the three standard Aramaic volumes of the *Zohar*, drawn from the Cremona edition and *Zohar Ḥadash*.

ḥasid, pl. ***ḥasidim*** "Pious one," devotee, saint, lover of God.

Havdalah "Differentiation"; prayer recited at the conclusion of Sabbath and festivals to indicate the distinction between the sacred day that has ended and the weekday that is beginning.

Heikhalot "Palaces"; descriptions of the heavenly and demonic palaces in *Zohar* 1:38a–45b; 2:244b–268b.

Ḥesed "Loving-kindness, love, grace"; the fourth *sefirah*; the right arm of the divine body, balancing *Din*; also called *Gedullah*.

Hod "Splendor"; the eighth *sefirah*; the left leg of the divine body; source of prophecy along with *Netsaḥ*.

Ḥokhmah "Wisdom"; the second *sefirah*; the primordial point of emanation.

Holy Ancient One The most ancient manifestation of *Ein Sof* through *Keter*, Its crown.

Hosha'na Rabbah "The Great *Hosha'na*"; the seventh day of Sukkot.

idra "Threshing place," assembly.

Idra Rabba “The Great Assembly”; a description of the gathering of Rabbi Shim’on and the Companions at the threshing house, where profound mysteries of divine being are expounded. *Zohar* 3:127b–145a.

Idra Zuta “The Small Assembly”; a description of the last gathering of Rabbi Shim’on and the Companions, the master’s final teachings, and his ecstatic death. *Zohar* 3:287b–296b.

Israel Often, the people of Israel.

Jubilee The year of release, occurring every fifty years at the end of the cycle of seven sabbatical years. According to Leviticus 25, in the Jubilee all land reverts to its original owners and all indentured Israelite slaves are freed. In Kabbalah, often a symbol of *Binah*.

Kabbalah Hebrew, קבלה (*qabbalah*), “receiving, that which is received, tradition”; originally referring to tradition in general (or to post-Mosaic Scripture), but from the thirteenth century onward, specifically to the esoteric teachings of Judaism.

Keter “Crown”; the first *sefirah*; coeternal with *Ein Sof*; also called *Ratson* (“Will”) and *Ayin* (“Nothingness”).

Lilith A demoness who harms babies and seduces men; married to Samael.

lulav “Sprout”; rabbinic term for the palm branch used together with three other plant species on the festival of *Sukkot*.

Malkhut “Kingdom”; the tenth *sefirah*, ruling the lower worlds; also called *Shekhinah*.

Matnitin “Our Mishnah”; short pieces scattered throughout the *Zohar*, most of which appear as utterances of a heavenly voice urging the Companions to arouse themselves and open their hearts to the mysteries. Some of them contain principles of kabbalistic teaching in a condensed form, constituting a kind of mystical Mishnah, expounded in the main section of the *Zohar*.

Matronita Aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, "matron, married woman, noble lady," often applied in the *Zohar* to *Shekhinah*, the wife of *Tif'eret*.

Metatron One of the supreme powers in the divine realm, often depicted as the chief angel. He is sometimes identified as *sar ha-panim* (Prince of the Countenance), standing face-to-face with God, or as *sar ha-olam* (Prince of the World).

midrash, pl. **midrashim** Homiletical or legal interpretation of the Bible.

Midrash ha-Ne'lam "The Concealed Midrash, the Esoteric Midrash"; an early stratum of the *Zohar*. Its language is a mixture of Hebrew and Aramaic. *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* on the Torah pertains to several portions of Genesis, the beginning of Exodus, and several other portions; it is printed partly alongside the main text of the *Zohar* and partly in *Zohar Ḥadash*. *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* on Song of Songs, Ruth, and Lamentations is printed in *Zohar Ḥadash*. The subject matter of *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* is mostly Creation, the soul, and the world to come; its style is often allegorical.

minḥah "Offering"; second of the three daily prayer services, recited in the afternoon.

Mishnah Collection of oral teachings compiled near the beginning of the third century by Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi; the earliest codification of Jewish Oral Law; the core of the Talmud.

mitsvah, pl. ***mitsvot*** "Commandment"; one of the 613 commandments of the Torah or one of various rabbinic precepts; religious duty; by extension, good deed.

musaf "Supplement"; the additional Sabbath and festival worship service, usually recited immediately after the morning service.

nefesh "Soul," life force; the basic level of the soul, animating the human being. (The other two levels are *ruaḥ* and *neshamah*.)

neshamah “Breath, soul,” soul-breath; the highest level of the soul. (The other two levels are *nefesh* and *ruaḥ*.)

Netsaḥ “Endurance”; the seventh *sefirah*; the right leg of the divine body; source of prophecy along with *Hod*.

Omer “Sheaf” of newly harvested barley; the seven-week period of ceremonially counting days, during the harvest season between the second day of *Pesaḥ* and the eve of *Shavu’ot*.

Oral Torah The rabbinic interpretation of the Written Torah (the Five Books of Moses); in Kabbalah, a symbol of *Shekhinah*.

Other Side Aramaic, סטרא אחרא (*Sitra Aḥra*); the demonic realm, or the shadow of the divine, led by Samael and Lilith.

parashah “Portion”; portion of the Torah read on a particular Sabbath, named after its opening word (or phrase) or a key word (or phrase) in the opening sentence.

Pesaḥ “Passover”; first of the three annual pilgrimage festivals, celebrated in the middle of the month of Nisan, commemorating the Exodus from Egypt.

Piqqudin “Commandments”; kabbalistic interpretations of the commandments scattered throughout the *Zohar* (to be distinguished from *Ra’aya Meheimna*).

Qav ha-Middah “The Standard of Measure”; a detailed description of the process of divine emanation, delivered by Rabbi Shim’on. *Zohar Ḥadash* 56d–58d.

Qedushah “Sanctification”; one of several prayers describing and emulating the ongoing sanctification of God by the angels in heaven.

Ra’aya Meheimna “The Faithful Shepherd”; a separate composition on the kabbalistic meaning of the commandments, printed piecemeal in the *Zohar*. Here Moses, the Faithful Shepherd, appears to Rabbi Shim’on and the Companions, revealing secrets.

Raḥamim “Compassion”; the sixth *sefirah*, harmonizing the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Din*; also called

Tif'eret.

Raza de-Razin "The Secret of Secrets"; a section of the *Zohar* dealing with physiognomy, metoposcopy, and chiromancy (*Zohar* 2:70a–75a [printed alongside the main text], *Zohar Ḥadash* 35b–37c). A second version is incorporated into the main body of the *Zohar* (2:70a–78a).

Rosh Hashanah The Jewish New Year, celebrated on the first two days of the Hebrew month Tishrei.

ruaḥ "Spirit, wind, breath"; the second level of soul. (The other two levels are *nefesh* and *neshamah*.)

Rut The book of Ruth.

Samael Prince of demons, married to Lilith; identical with Satan.

Sava "The Elder; old man."

Sava de-Mishpatim "Old Man of [Torah portion] *Mishpatim*"; an account of the Companions' encounter with a donkey-driver who turns out to be a master of wisdom. *Zohar* 2:94b–114a.

Sefer ha-Zohar "The Book of Radiance."

sefirah, pl. ***sefirot*** Literally, "counting," number, numerical entity; in Kabbalah, one of the ten aspects of divine personality, nine of which emanate from *Ein Sof* and the first *sefirah, Keter*. See the diagram on page ix.

Shaddai An obscure divine name, which may originally have meant "[God of] the mountain." In Kabbalah it often denotes *Shekhinah*.

Shavu'ot "Weeks"; second of the three annual pilgrimage festivals, celebrated seven weeks after the beginning of Passover.

Shekhinah "Presence," divine immanence; the tenth and last *sefirah*; female partner of *Tif'eret*; also called *Malkhut*.

Shema Literally, "hear"; central prayer recited morning and evening, comprising Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:13–21; and Numbers 15:37–41. The opening verse is: *Hear O Israel! YHVH our God, YHVH is one!*

Shir ha-Shirim The book of Song of Songs.

Sifra di-Tsni'uta "The Book of Concealment"; an anonymous, highly condensed commentary on the beginning of the Torah, consisting of five short chapters and composed in obscure sentences. Its subject is the mysterious dynamics of divine being. *Zohar* 2:176b–179a.

Sitra Aḥra "The other side"; the demonic realm, or the shadow of the divine, led by Samael and Lilith.

Sitrei Otiyyot "Secrets of the Letters"; a discourse by Rabbi Shim'on focusing on the letters of the divine name *YHVH* and how they symbolize the process of emanation. *Zohar Ḥadash* 1b–7b.

Sitrei Torah "Secrets of Torah"; interpretations of certain verses of Genesis, printed in separate columns parallel to the main body of the *Zohar* and in *Zohar Ḥadash*. It includes allegorical explanations of the mysteries of the soul.

Sukkot "Booths"; festival of Booths, last of the three annual pilgrimage festivals, celebrated in the middle of the month of Tishrei at the conclusion of the summer harvest.

tallit A prayer shawl with a tzitzit on each corner.

Talmud Each of the two compilations of Jewish law, legend, ethics, and theology comprising the Mishnah and its vast commentary (the Gemara) by rabbis of the third through fifth centuries. The Jerusalem Talmud was compiled ca. 400 C.E.; the Babylonian Talmud, about one hundred years later.

Targum "Translation"; an Aramaic translation of the Torah or the Bible.

tav The last letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

tefillin "Phylacteries"; two black leather boxes containing passages from the Torah (Exodus 13:1–10, 11–16; Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:13–21) written on parchment. They are bound by black leather straps on the left arm and on the head, and are prescribed for men to wear during weekday morning prayer. Each of the biblical passages

indicates that the Children of Israel should place a sign upon their hand and a frontlet (or reminder) between their eyes.

teshuvah "Return, turning back to God, repentance."

Tif'eret "Beauty, glory"; the sixth *sefirah*, harmonizing the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Din*; male partner of *Shekhinah*; the torso of the divine body; also called *Raḥamim*.

Tiqqunei ha-Zohar "Embellishments on the *Zohar*"; an independent book whose setting is similar to *Ra'aya Meheimna*. It comprises a commentary on the beginning of Genesis, each *tiqqun* opening with a new interpretation of the word בראשית (*be-reshit*), "in the beginning."

Tiqqunim "Embellishments"; additional material in the genre of *Tiqqunei ha-Zohar*, printed in *Zohar Ḥadash* 93c–122b.

Torah "Instruction, teaching"; the Five Books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy); by extension, the entire corpus of Jewish religious literature.

Tosafot "Additions"; a collection of comments on the Talmud written between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries in France and Germany, printed in standard editions of the Talmud. Also, a set of Zoharic additions printed at the end of the second and third of the three standard Aramaic volumes of the *Zohar*, drawn from the Cremona edition and from *Zohar Ḥadash*.

Tosefta "Addenda"; in rabbinic literature, a collection of precepts parallel to and contemporary with the Mishnah. In the *Zohar*, a collection similar to *Matnitin*.

Tsaddiq "Righteous One"; a name for *Yesod*, the ninth *sefirah*.

tzitzit "Tassels," one of four affixed to the hem of a garment, and later of a prayer shawl. See Numbers 15:37–41.

world that is coming Hebrew, העולם הבא (*ha-olam ha-ba*); Aramaic, עלמא דאתי (*alma de-atei*); often understood as

referring to the hereafter and usually translated as “the world to come.” From another perspective, however, “the world that is coming” already exists—occupying another, timeless dimension. In Kabbalah this phrase often refers to *Binah*, the continuous source of emanation, who “is constantly coming, never ceasing.”

Written Torah The Five Books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy); in Kabbalah, a symbol of *Tif’eret*.

Yah A contracted biblical form of the divine name *YHVH*.

Yesod “Foundation”; the ninth *sefirah*, who channels the flow of emanation to *Shekhinah*; the phallus of the divine body; also called *Tsaddiq*.

YHVH The ineffable name of God, apparently deriving from the root הוה (*hvh*), “to be.” In the *Zohar* it often symbolizes *Tif’eret*.

Yishtabaḥ “May [Your name] be praised”; the prayer of benediction following the biblical hymns recited daily at the beginning of the morning service.

Yom Kippur The Day of Atonement, observed on the tenth of the Hebrew month Tishrei.

zohar “Radiance, splendor.”

Zohar Ḥadash “New Zohar”; a collection of Zoharic texts not included in the early editions of the *Zohar*. It was first printed in Salonika in 1597. The title is misleading since *Zohar Ḥadash* contains much of *Midrash ha-Ne’lam*, an early stratum of the *Zohar*.

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1. For a list of eighty-four *Zohar* manuscripts, see Rubin, “Mif’al ha-Zohar,” 172–73.

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1. ***And you, bring near to you…*** The full verse reads: *And you, bring near to you Aaron your brother and his sons with him from the midst of the Children of Israel to be priests to Me—Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron*.

2. **What is different here…** Why do these verses duplicate the pronoun *you*? Rabbi Ḥiyya explains that the word אתה (*attah*), *you*, signifies *Shekhinah*, the Divine Presence, who is the most accessible of all the *sefirot* and can be addressed directly. In these various verses relating to the Dwelling (or Tabernacle), God instructs Moses to include *Shekhinah* with him.

On *Shekhinah* as *attah*, see *Zohar* 1:15b, 37a, 154b, 156b, 158b, 169a, 198a, 205b; 2:23b, 70a (*RR*), 104a, 138b, 140a, 221a, 261a (*Heikh*); 3:199a. Cf. 3:193b.

3. **Upper light and lower light… *ve-attah, and you…*** Rabbi Yitsḥak agrees that אתה (*attah*), *you*, indicates *Shekhinah* (known as "lower light" and moon), but he points out that the conjunction ו (*ve*), *and*, designates Her partner, *Tif'eret* (known as "upper light" and sun), since the letter ו (*vav*) is numerically equivalent to six, referring to *Tif'eret* together with the five *sefirot* surrounding Him (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*).

The verse in Nehemiah now implies that the divine couple, by uniting, enliven all the worlds. Similarly, in the verses in Exodus the apparently superfluous word ואתה (*ve-attah*), *and you*, alludes to this couple, who joined as one and settled upon the site of the Dwelling, inspiring its artistic construction. On the sefirotic significance of *ve-attah*, see *Zohar* 2:23b, 138b.

4. **Rabbi El'azar said, "From here…**" Rabbi El'azar agrees with Rabbi Yitsḥak that *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah* inspired the building of the Dwelling, but he offers a more relevant proof-text. In this verse, *YHVH* signifies *Tif'eret*, who inspired the craftsmen via *Shekhinah*.

The full verse reads: *Bezalel and Oholiab and every wise-hearted man whom YHVH has given wisdom and*

understanding to know how to do the task of the holy work, shall do all that YHVH has commanded.

5. **Rabbi Shim'on said, "From here…**" Offering yet another proof-text. One would expect the verse in Exodus to employ the plural wording, *them whom I have filled* (matching *all who are wise of heart*). However, the singular wording, *him whom I have filled*, alludes to *Shekhinah*, who is known as *heart*. She was filled by *Tif'eret*, who conveyed to Her the spirit of all the *sefirot*, stemming from *Ḥokhmah* (*wisdom*).

The final sentence of this paragraph apparently means that the entirety of the *sefirot* (included in the union of the divine couple) is referred to in each of verses listed above by Rabbi Ḥiyya.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *And you, you shall speak to all who are wise of heart, whom I have filled with a spirit of wisdom, that they make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, to be a priest to Me*.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *The spirit of YHVH will alight upon him: a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and power, a spirit of knowledge and awe of YHVH*. The Messianic figure here is associated or identified with *Shekhinah*.

6. **If so…** If the proof-text offered by Rabbi Shim'on alludes to the union of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, then how does he explain the apparently redundant wording ואתה (*ve-attah*), *and you*, in the verses listed by Rabbi Ḥiyya?

7. **Each one of them settles…** Each occurrence of the word ואתה (*ve-attah*), *and you*, is relevant, specifying the divine union. In Exodus 28:1, Moses is commanded to *bring near* to himself the unified Divine Name, encompassing both *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. The next two verses listed by Rabbi Ḥiyya (Exodus 28:3 and 27:20) allude to the Holy Spirit, which issues from the union of the divine couple. Here, Rabbi Shim'on apparently interprets the second-person masculine verbs תדבר (*tedabber*), *you shall speak*, and תצוה

(*tetsavveh*), *you shall command*, as if they were in the third-person feminine: *she* [namely, the Holy Spirit] *shall speak*; *she shall command*. The final verse (Exodus 30:23), like the first, implies that Moses should unify *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, this time in order to properly prepare the precious anointing oil.

8. ***And You, YHVH, be not far…*** King David the Psalmist addresses both *Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret*, known respectively as *You* and *YHVH*, praying that they not separate from one another. For if the upper light (*Tif'eret*) withdraws from the lower light (*Shekhinah*), the world will darken. It was precisely this type of divine separation that doomed the Temple.

Rabbi Shim'on associates the name of the prophet ירמיהו (*Yirmeyahu*), Jeremiah, with the root רום (*rum*), "to be high," alluding to the ascension and withdrawal of the upper light. His very name, together with Israel's sinfulness, effected the Temple's destruction.

According to a rabbinic tradition, *Shekhinah* was present only in the First Temple (which was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.E.) and not in the Second Temple (rebuilt some seventy years later). According to another view, *Shekhinah* was present in the Second Temple too, but was not as effective. See JT *Makkot* 2:6, 32a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 36:8; BT *Yoma* 9b–10a, 21b; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 35, 160a. On the significance of Jeremiah's name, cf. *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:1. On the verse in Psalms, see *Zohar* 2:138b.

9. ***Yirmeyahu … ישעיהו (Yeshayahu)…*** Whereas Jeremiah's name effected the ascension and withdrawal of the upper light, the name of the prophet ישעיהו (*Yeshayahu*), Isaiah, connotes ישע (*yesha*), "salvation, deliverance," and he effected redemption and the rebuilding of the Temple.

Just as the names of these two prophets proved decisive and effective, so do the letters of the alphabet, and especially the letters of the Name *YHVH*. On the effectiveness of names, see BT *Berakhot* 7b; *Zohar* 1:6a, 58b, 60a; 2:103a, 104a, 223a, 230a; 3:25a, 72a, 75b, 199b.

10. **First mystery: י (*Yod*)...** The first letter of יהוה (*YHVH*), shaped like a point, corresponds to the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*. The nine pedestals may correspond to the nine *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* itself through *Shekhinah*, or from *Binah* through *Shekhinah*, including the hidden *sefirah* of *Da'at*.

The primordial point (*Ḥokhmah*) parallels the final point (*Shekhinah*), who is known as End of Thought, the culmination of emanation, conceived in the divine mind; the former point is male, the latter female.

This long passage on the mysteries of the letters (extending below to p. 13) exhibits numerous parallels with *Sitrei Otiyyot* (*ZḤ* 1b–7b). On the nine סמכין (*samekhin*), "pedestals, supports," see *ZḤ* 1b (*SO*). For various interpretations of this entire passage, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Yahel Or*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

11. **the letter ם (final *mem*)... the letter ס (*samekh*)...** The square shape of the letter ם (final *mem*) matches the pattern of points pictured in the text corresponding to the following note. In the *Zohar* the shape of this letter often symbolizes *Binah*, while *Shekhinah* can be symbolized by a circle. Although here the circular *samekh* is pictured as "below" the final *mem*, in *Zohar* 2:127a–b *samekh* symbolizes *Binah* when She ascends to Her source in the primordial round point of *Ḥokhmah* and encloses Herself within.

The association of letters with points reflects a famous technique in Islamic calligraphy, according to which the shape and size of each letter is determined based on a rhombic dot as a unit of measurement. This technique was introduced by the tenth-century vizier and calligrapher Abu Ali Muhammad ibn Muqla and has been called "the most important single development in Arabic calligraphy." See Safadi, *Islamic Calligraphy*, 17–18; Schimmel, *Calligraphy and Islamic Culture*, 18–19.

For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On final

mem as symbolizing *Binah*, see *Zohar* 1:34b; 2:127a–b, 135a; 3:66b, 156b, 285b; *ZḤ* 5c (*SO*), 38c, 41d, 72b–d (*ShS*).

12. **This square one… nine points…** Each side of the square consists of three points, totaling eight (as pictured in the diagram), plus a single point in the middle, totaling nine.

"The Lamp" renders בוצינא (*botsina*), apparently referring to the impulse radiating from *Ein Sof* and delineating the stages of emanation. See Vol. 5, pp. 560–61, n. 35.

13. **mystery of the letter י (*yod*)…** The traditional shape of this letter is י, which includes a tip at the top left, a tip at the bottom, and the body of the letter, which itself is similar to a point. These three components are referred to here as "three points, like this: ∵," a figure that also represents the vowel *segol*. Various manuscripts include different figures here.

On the three components of *yod*, see *Zohar* 3:10b, 11b; *TZ* 69, 104b. Cf. *Zohar* 1:15b, 16b–17a (Vol. 1, p. 126, n. 137). On letters being measured in points, see above, note 11.

14. **nine points of the Torah** Referring to nine Hebrew vowels, which are known as נקודות (*nequddot*), literally "points." See *Zohar* 1:100b (*ST*); *TZ*, intro, 4b, 13b; *ZḤ* (*Tiq*), 104b–c.

15. **In the mystery of the Book of Adam…** In this mysterious book are recorded various permutations of the name *YHVH*, according to different vowel combinations. The generated lights carry the Dwelling, which symbolizes *Shekhinah*.

On the Book of Adam, see BT *Bava Metsi'a* 85b–86a, where Rabbi Yehudah the Prince states that he was once shown the Book of Adam, which contained the genealogy of the entire human race. See Genesis 5:1; *Bereshit Rabbah* 24:1; BT *Sanhedrin* 38b, *Avodah Zarah* 5a.

The *Zohar*'s Book of Adam is not to be confused with the Book of Adam in the Apocrypha. According to various

medieval traditions, the angel Raziel transmitted a magical book to Adam. Later, probably in the seventeenth century, *Sefer Razi'el* (the Book of Raziel) was compiled in its present form, comprising ancient magical, mystical, and cosmological teachings.

See *Zohar* 1:17b, 37a–b, 55a–b, 58b, 72b, 90b, 227b; 2:70a–b, 70a–b (*RR*), 77a, 131a, 181a, 197a; 3:10a, 68b; *ZḤ* 16b (*MhN*), 37b; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:117–18, n. 110; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 85–87. Note the comment by Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, 1:22d: "All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*… have been lost in the wanderings of exile…. Nothing is left of them except what is mentioned in the *Zohar*."

16. **mystery of seventy-two engraved letters…** Alluding to the Divine Name of Seventy-two, which is associated with *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* (representing respectively right, left, and middle).

The number twelve derives from three points in each of four directions. The number seventy-two derives from twelve points in each of six aspects, corresponding to the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*.

On the Name of Seventy-two, see *Zohar* 2:51b–52a; Vol. 4, pp. 257–64 and esp. nn. 216, 221–26.

17. **All arises in the Will of Thought…** In the highest sefirotic realm. The Name of Seventy-two consists of seventy-two triads of letters. (See the references at the end of the preceding note.) On the three points of *yod*, see above, note 13.

18. **Second mystery: Letter ה (*he*)…** The second letter of יהוה (*YHVH*) corresponds to *Binah*. The numerical value of this letter is five, alluding to the five *sefirot* that support *Binah*, from *Ḥesed* through *Hod*.

As explained above (note 12), "the Lamp" refers to the impulse radiating from *Ein Sof* and delineating the stages of emanation. This lamp is also known as קו המדה (*qav ha-middah*), "the Line of Measure," gauging the divine flow.

Binah is pictured as a palace, housing the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*. Although She is sometimes represented by the letter ם (final *mem*), here Her symbol is *he*. See above, note 11.

19. **For when radiance of the Lamp struck the letter י (*yod*)...** The three points of the letter י (*yod*) turn into the form of the letter ה (*he*), apparently as follows: The two upper points of the letter *yod* expand into three, forming the top line and right side of the letter *he*. The lower point of the letter *yod* expands into two, forming the left "leg" of the letter *he*.

See Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, 1:262d; Scholem. On the three points of *yod*, see above, note 13. On the nine pedestals, see above, note 10.

20. **Four are concealed...** Just as *Shekhinah* ("*he* below") stands above four camps of angels, so *Binah* stands above four sefirotic entities.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. See *ZḤ* 1c (*SO*).

21. **In the Book of Mysteries of Enoch...** The five pedestals and five pillars amount to "the mystery of ten." The number thirteen apparently refers to two aspects of *he*, each standing above five supports, totaling twelve, plus the overarching entity of *he*. This total of thirteen corresponds to the thirteen attributes of Compassion, which are listed in Exodus 34:6–7: *YHVH, YHVH! A compassionate and gracious God*....

"Six times" refers to the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. This number multiplied by twelve equals seventy-two, alluding to the Name of Seventy-two. (See above, note 16.) When the thirty-two paths of Wisdom (mentioned at the beginning of *Sefer Yetsirah*) are subtracted from seventy-two, "forty remain," which, when supplemented by God's "two ears," increase to forty-two, corresponding to the Name of Forty-two.

The Name of Forty-two Letters is mentioned in the name of Rav, though not recorded, in BT *Qiddushin* 71a. Hai Gaon indicates that it consists of the letters יגלפזק , שקוצית , אבגיתץ , קרעשטן , נגדיכש , בטרצתג , חקבטנע , which are also the initial letters of the forty-two words constituting the prayer *Anna be-Khoaḥ* (Please, with the Strength [of Your Right Hand's Greatness]). According to Jacob ben Meir Tam (Rabbenu Tam), this name consists of the first forty-two letters of the Torah, from the ב (*bet*) of בראשית (*Bereshit*), *In the beginning*, through the ב (*vet*) of בהו (*vohu*), *empty* (or *void*) (Genesis 1:2).

See Lewin, *Otsar ha-Ge'onim*, 4:2:23 (on *Ḥagigah* 14b); *Tosafot, Ḥagigah* 11b, s.v. *ein doreshin*; *Zohar* 1:1a, 15b, 30a–b; 2:92b (*Piq*), 130b, 132b, 175b, 187a, 234a–b; 3:78a, 172b; *ZḤ* 42a; Cordovero, *Pardes Rimmonim* 21:12–13; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 94–95; Idel, "Al ha-Peirushim," 161–62, n. 24; 167–68, n. 52. Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:62.

"The Book of the Mysteries of Enoch" is one of the volumes of esoteric knowledge housed in the real or imaginary Zoharic library. Concerning Enoch, Genesis 5:24 states: *He was no more, for God took him*. In post-biblical literature this verse is taken to mean that God transported Enoch through the heavens, a journey recorded extensively in the Enoch literature. The *Zohar*'s Book of Enoch, though influenced by this literature, is not identical with any of its particular volumes.

On this book, see *Zohar* 1:13a, 37b, 58b, 72b; 2:55a, 100a, 103b, 105b, 192b, 217a, 277a–b; 3:10b, 236b, 240a, 248b, 253b; *ZḤ* 1c–2b (concerning the letter *he*), 3b, 4b (all *SO*). See Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:158, 163, nn. 60, 61; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 80–83.

22. **For there are large letters... small letters...** Certain letters in the Torah are written large, for example, the ב (*bet*) of בראשית (*Be-reshit*), *In the beginning* (Genesis 1:1). Others are written small, for example, the א (*alef*) of ויקרא (*Va-*

yiqra), *And He called* (Leviticus 1:1). Here, the entire large alphabet is associated with *Binah* ("above"), while the small alphabet is associated with *Shekhinah* ("below").

The "higher holy names" are efficacious if one meditates upon them (and need not, or should not, be pronounced), whereas "lower holy names" can, or should, be pronounced while being the objects of meditation.

On the large and small letters, see *Zohar* 1:3b, 159b; 2:132a, 174a, 205b, 228b; 3:2a, 220a; *ZḤ* 65d (*ShS*), 66c (*ShS*), 74c–d (*ShS*).

23. **other names below from that Other Side...** The power of these demonic names depends upon impure action below, which stimulates the demonic power.

On Balaam's demonic actions, see *Zohar* 3:207a. "The children of the East" were famous for their knowledge of astrology and magic. See *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:23; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:3; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 6; Judah ben Barzillai, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 159; Naḥmanides, introduction to Commentary on the Torah, and on Deuteronomy 18:10; *Zohar* 1:99b–100b, 133b, 223a–b; 2:171b, 188a. Nearly all these sources quote 1 Kings 5:10: *Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the children of the East*. See also BT *Sanhedrin* 91a (quoting Genesis 25:6); Liebes, "Zohar and Iamblichus."

24. **These are not dependent on inscribed letters...** The demonic names are not dependent on any of the holy letters of Torah except for ח (*ḥet*) and ק (*qof*), as well as two others letters contained in the word שקר (*sheqer*), "lie."

Psalm 145 is an alphabetical acrostic, in which the second half of every verse begins with the letter ו (*vav*), "and," except for the two verses that open with the letters *ḥet* and *qof*, in which the second half does not begin with *vav*. According to Rabbi Shim'on, the *vav* is lacking because it symbolizes *Tif'eret*, the blessed Holy One, who cannot be associated here with these two letters.

The letter *ḥet* may imply here חטא (*ḥet*), “sin.” The letter *qof* may imply קליפה (*qelippah*), “husk,” or קללה (*qelalah*), “curse.” On this letter, see Vol. 5, p. 364, n. 492; p. 387, n. 561; p. 472, n. 803. On the letters of שקר (*sheqer*), see BT *Shabbat* 104a; Judah ben Barzillai, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 146; *Zohar* 1:2b.

On the two unique verses in Psalm 145 and their initial letters, see Abraham ben Nathan ha-Yarḥi, *Sefer ha-Manhig*, 1:53; Eleazar of Worms, *Peirushei Siddur ha-Tefillah*, 1:165, par. 27; Isaiah ben Mali di Trani, *Pisqei ha-Ri"d, Berakhot*, 7–8; Zedekiah Anav, *Shibbolei ha-Leqet*, 7, p. 146; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 39.

25. **Thus, they are forty-two supernal letters…** Rabbi Shim’on returns to this divine name, which is associated with Creation. See above, note 21.

The number ninety may result from the following calculation: the letter ה (*he*) is numerically equivalent to five, which when multiplied by ten equals fifty, which when added to forty equals ninety. (Forty is the remainder when the thirty-two paths are subtracted from the Name of Seventy-two. On this and on the two divine ears, see above, note 21.) For various calculations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

Now the number ninety-two is increased by eight—symbolizing *Yesod*, the divine phallus and the site of circumcision, which is normally performed on the eighth day. The total thus comes to one hundred, corresponding to the one hundred blessings that one should recite daily, thereby adorning the tenth *sefirah, Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel).

On *Yesod* as the eighth firmament, see *Zohar* 1:162b; cf. *Bahir* 105 (157). On reciting one hundred blessings daily, see BT *Menaḥot* 43b; *Tanḥuma, Qoraḥ* 12; Vol. 5, p. 190, n. 14.

In rabbinic literature the phrase כנסת ישראל (*Keneset Yisra’el*), “Assembly of Israel,” nearly always denotes the

people of Israel. The Midrash on the Song of Songs describes an allegorical love affair between the maiden (the earthly community of Israel) and her lover (the Holy One, blessed be He). In the *Zohar,* *Keneset Yisra'el* can refer to the earthly community but also (often primarily) to *Shekhinah*, the divine feminine counterpart of the people, the aspect of God most intimately connected with them. The lovers in the Song of Songs are pictured as a divine couple, *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. See BT *Berakhot* 35b; below, p. 96, n. 111.

26. **This ה (*he*) is shaped like two *nuns*...** Perhaps Rabbi Shim'on is picturing an upside down נ (*nun*), forming the top of the ה (*he*) and its right side, and a final ן (*nun*), forming its left leg. See Vital, and for various other explanations, *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

The numerical value of the letter נ (*nun*) is fifty, so two *nun*s equal one hundred, the sum mentioned in the preceding paragraph. The full spelling of the name of this letter—נון (*nun*)—includes two *nun*s and the letter ו (*vav*) in between, the latter symbolizing *Tif'eret*, who gestates within *Binah* (symbolized by *he*) and is "crowned" by Her. See *Zohar* 2:235b.

The number fifty is frequently associated with *Binah*, based on a statement attributed to Rav and Shemu'el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a): "Fifty gates of *binah* (understanding) were created in the world, and all were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6)." See Naḥmanides, *Peirush al ha-Torah*, intro, 3–4; *Zohar* 1:3b. For various interpretations of this entire paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

27. **When arrayed in these fifty alone...** *Binah* is symbolized by both ה (*he*) and נ (*nun*), the latter numerically equivalent to fifty. See the preceding note.

28. **Third mystery: ו (*vav*)...** The third letter of יהוה (*YHVH*), whose numerical value is six, symbolizes *Tif'eret*, together with the five other *sefirot* surrounding Him (from

Ḥesed through *Yesod*). *Tif'eret* constitutes the torso of the Primordial Adam, whose arms are *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, and whose legs are *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*.

The twelve chariots apparently correspond to twelve entities associated with *Tif'eret*. (See Vol. 5, pp. 75–76, n. 217.) The twenty-four chariots (or bodily members) apparently include these twelve entities plus three joints of each arm (shoulder, elbow, and wrist) and three joints of each leg (hip, knee, and ankle). On these joints, see *Zohar* 1:154a, 241a; 2:244a–b; 3:142a–b (*IR*).

The shape of the letter ו (*vav*) implies here that all these various components are included in its single line, and it may represent the Arabic numeral 1. Cf. below, note 32.

On *vav* as symbolizing *Adam* or the torso, see *Zohar* 2:42a (*RM*); 3:66b; *ZḤ* 5c (*SO*), 60d (*MhN, ShS*).

29. **One body comprised of twenty-four chariots...** The twenty-four components include six of the head (perhaps referring to the two ears, two eyes, nose, and mouth) and eighteen of the torso (referring to the number of vertebrae, according to rabbinic anatomy). The shape of the letter ו (*vav*) embodies these two numbers; its head (namely, the short top horizontal stroke) measures six points, while its torso (the long vertical stroke) measures eighteen points.

On the eighteen vertebrae, see M *Oholot* 1:8; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 1:8; BT *Berakhot* 28b. On the twelve chariots, see the preceding note. On letters being measured in points, see above, note 11.

"To conduct" renders לאענאה (*le-a'ana'ah*), a neologism apparently meaning "to shepherd," based playfully on ענא (*ana*), "sheep." See *Zohar* 2:198a; *ZḤ* 28b (*MhN*), 73a (*ShS*), 104a–d (*Tiq*), 105b (*Tiq*); Scholem.

30. **When the perfection of this letter is manifested...** The perfection of the letter ו (*vav*) symbolizes the fullness of *Tif'eret*, which banishes all evil forces, preventing them from threatening *Shekhinah* (symbolized by

the moon). *Tif'eret* Himself now illumines Her. If, however, *Tif'eret* withdraws, then the demonic Accuser is empowered.

The description "he ascends, misleads…" is a paraphrase of the account of Satan's activity in BT *Bava Batra* 16a: "He descends and leads astray, ascends and arouses wrath, obtains authorization and seizes the soul." See *Zohar* 1:190a; 2:33b, 196a.

On Satan (or the evil impulse) as *an old and foolish king*, see *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 16; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 4:13; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:5; *Zohar* 1:78a–b (*ST*), 110b (*MhN*), 179a–b; 2:33b, 238a.

"Windows" renders משקופין (*mashqofin*). The Hebrew term משקוף (*mashqof*) means "lintel," but here *mashqofin* connotes "windows, window openings," perhaps based on שקפים (*shequfim*) in 1 Kings 6:4; 7:4; or on the verb השקיף (*hishqif*), "to look down from above" (see Genesis 26:8; 2 Kings 9:30, where this verb refers to looking out of a window). See *Zohar* 2:143a, 172a, 241b; *ZḤ* 15c (*MhN*), 76c (*MhN, Rut*), 90b–d (*MhN, Rut*).

31. ***Vav* is the light illumining the moon…** That is, illumining *Shekhinah*. The "one expanse" is *Yesod*, the phallic extension of *Tif'eret*, symbolized by the letter א (*alef*), whose middle slanted line is shaped like a ו (*vav*). *Yesod* conveys to *Shekhinah* the light of *Tif'eret*.

On *Yesod* as *alef*, see *Zohar* 2:145b.

32. **In the Book of Adam…** This mysterious source offers a different description of the shape of the letter ו (*vav*): the head (namely, the short top horizontal line) of the letter measures one point (corresponding to *Tif'eret* itself), while the torso (the long vertical line) measures five points (corresponding to the five other *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*). Cf. above, note 29. On letters being measured in points, see above, note 11. On the Book of Adam, see above, note 15.

Perhaps the connection between a point and completing the number ten is related to the fact that zero was once

represented by a point or dot, although as the Hindu symbol for zero was transmitted to the West by the Arabs, it became a small circle. See Menninger, *Number Words and Number Symbols*, 400–21; Lemay, "The Hispanic Origin of Our Present Numeral Forms," 451–53; Kunitzsch, "The Transmission of Hindu-Arabic Numerals Reconsidered," 3–4." Cf. above, note 28.

33. **When the sun enters the moon…** The union of *Tif'eret* with *Shekhinah* is consummated by the expanse of *Yesod*, the divine phallus and site of the covenant of circumcision. *Tif'eret* is symbolized by the letter ו (*vav*), while *Yesod* (the extension of *Tif'eret*) is symbolized by the letter ג (*gimel*), whose shape resembles ו (*vav*) plus an extension at the bottom left.

On *gimel* symbolizing *Yesod*, see *Zohar* 1:234b, 244b; *ZḤ* 6c (*SO*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 340; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 229.

34. ***bring near to you Aaron your brother…*** Moses, who symbolizes *Tif'eret* (the torso), is commanded to include *Aaron*, who symbolizes *Ḥesed* (the right arm), along with *his sons* (the supports of this arm). Moses includes also the left arm, symbolized by *the Levites*—and so the letter *vav* (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) is now complete, culminating in the expanse of *Yesod*, to unite with *Shekhinah*.

35. **Final ה (*he*)…** The final letter of the name יהוה (*YHVH*) symbolizes *Shekhinah*, whose body comprises Her angelic camps. The letter *vav* (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) enters Her. Above and below this *vav* stand two points, namely *Binah* and *Shekhinah*. *Binah* (or *Binah* through *Yesod*) represents the upper world, while *Shekhinah* represents the lower.

36. **Rabbi El'azar and Rabbi Abba came…** To thank Rabbi Shim'on for revealing these secrets of the letters of the Holy Name. "The sun" may allude to *Tif'eret*, but primarily it signifies Rabbi Shim'on himself, who illumines the world and whose death would threaten doom.

On Rabbi Shim'on and the sun, see *Zohar* 2:15a (*MhN*); 3:132b (*IR*). On his unique status, see Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 1–84; Huss, *Ke-Zohar ha-Raqi'a*, 11–42; Vol. 4, p. 180, n. 146. Cf. above at note 8.

37. **Legs below...** Rabbi El'azar asks his father to prove how the two *sefirot Netsaḥ* and *Hod* (symbolizing the divine legs below *Tif'eret*) are included in the letter *vav*.

38. ***Remember the Torah of Moses My servant...*** *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* are the source of prophecy and are themselves called "prophets." If these two *sefirot* were not included in *Tif'eret* (symbolized by *vav* and by Moses), then the verse would have to read *Moses My prophet*, in order to allude to them along with Moses; but since the verse reads *Moses My servant*, the sefirotic "prophets" must already be included. The letter *vav* thus spans all the lower *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

39. **Moses did not join...** Moses (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) did not unite with the moon (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) until he attained and included all the lower *sefirot* (from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*). Rabbi Shim'on focuses on the letter ו (*vav*) at the end of the word לכהנו (*le-khahano*), *to be priests*. He reads this perhaps as the possessive "his"—referring to *Tif'eret*'s (or Moses') union with *Shekhinah*—but also as the sefirotic *vav* (symbolizing *Tif'eret*), construing the biblical word as לכהן ו (*le-khahen vav*), "to serve *Tif'eret* (symbolized by *vav*)," namely to enact the union of *Tif'eret* with *Shekhinah*. The following word, לי (*li*), *to Me*, is interpreted as "to (or with) *Shekhinah*," who is symbolized by the letter ה (*he*).

The phrase "entered and emerged" derives from the famous description of four rabbis who "entered the orchard," that is, who engaged in mystical contemplation of the divine realm. Only Rabbi Akiva "entered in peace and emerged in peace." In the *Zohar*, "one who has entered and emerged" refers to a kabbalist who has entered the realm

of mystery and emerged unscathed, one who has plumbed the secrets and applied them.

See JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4 (and cf. *Tosefta Ḥagigah* 2:4; BT *Ḥagigah* 14b); Vol. 5, pp. 531–32, n. 980.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *And you, bring near to you Aaron your brother and his sons with him from the midst of the Children of Israel to be priests to Me—Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron*.

40. **nothing is drawn near…** Union is actualized only by *the Children of Israel*, whose purpose on earth is to kindle the sefirotic lamps and to draw earthly reality above.

41. **All is bringing near—for one who knows…** One who knows how to unify the *sefirot* can achieve this not only by standard rituals such as prayer and sacrifice, but by any sincere act. See *Or Yaqar*.

In Kabbalah, the term קרבן (*qorban*), "offering, sacrifice," is interpreted according to its root קרב (*qrv*), "to draw near." When a *qorban* is fitting, all the *sefirot* are drawn near and unified, and the divine countenance shines. When a *qorban* is not fitting, sadness prevails, *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon) darkens, and demonic forces rule. See *Bahir* 77–78 (108–109).

Maimonides had relativized the importance of the sacrificial offerings, explaining them away as a concession to the primitive nature of ancient Israel. The *Zohar* counters by emphasizing their vital role in unifying and sustaining the cosmos. See Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:32; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:878–90.

42. **The blessed Holy One did not test Job…** Whereas Abraham bound Isaac on the altar as a sacrifice, Job did not offer anything on his own; rather, Satan (the Accuser) deprived him of his children and livestock.

On God arousing Satan toward Job, see *Shemot Rabbah* 21:7 (quoted below, note 49); *Bereshit Rabbah* 57:4; *Zohar* 2:33a; 3:101b, 218a–b (*RM*). The expression "his only son,"

referring to Isaac, derives from Genesis 22:2: *He said, "Take your son—your only one, whom you love, Isaac—and go forth to the land of Moriah and offer him up there as an ascent offering on one of the mountains that I will tell you of."*

The full verse in Job reads: *YHVH said to Satan, "Have you noticed My servant Job? For there is no one like him on earth, a man blameless and upright, revering God and shunning evil."* This passage (until below at note 48) appears with some variation in *Zohar* 2:34a.

43. ***It happened at the end of days…*** The phrase ימים מקץ (*mi-qets yamim*) is usually taken to mean *in the course of time*, but here Rabbi Shim'on focuses on the literal meaning: *at the end of days*, which he understands as referring to the demonic power who appears as the Angel of Death, bringing *an end* to the *days* of every mortal creature. Cain's offering was not accepted because it derived from (or was intended for) the demonic realm, not from (or for) *Shekhinah*, who is known as קץ ימין (*qets yamin*), *the end of the right*—the consummation of the divine flow, characterized by the grace of the right side. Cain rejected *Shekhinah* in favor of the demonic power.

The phrase *qets yamin* derives from the verse in Daniel: *As for you, go on till the end; you will rest, and arise for your share* לקץ הימין (*le-qets ha-yamin*), *at the end of days*. The word ימין (*yamin*) is an aramaized form of the Hebrew ימים (*yamim*), "days," but here Rabbi Shim'on understands it as the Hebrew ימין (*yamin*), "right."

See *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:6; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 17:5; *Zohar* 1:54a–b, 62b–63a, 75a (*ST*), 152b, 193a, 210b, 233b, 234b–235a; 2:134a–b; 3:142b (*IR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 73–75, 368–71; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 80–81 (102–3).

On the demonic nature of the Angel of Death, see BT *Bava Batra* 16a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "Satan, the evil impulse, and the Angel of Death are one and the same." The

full verse in Psalms reads: *Let me know, YHVH, my end, and what is the measure of my days; I would know how fleeting I am*.

44. ***And Abel, he too brought…*** The verse continues: *—from the firstlings of his flock and from their fat*.

"To amplify" renders לאסגאה (*le-asga'ah*), "to increase," a Zoharic translation of the rabbinic Hebrew לרבות (*le-rabbot*), "to increase," that is, to include, amplify, encompass, or widen the scope of meaning. In rabbinic hermeneutics the word גם (*gam*), "also, too," amplifies the literal meaning of a biblical word or phrase. Here, the phrase *he too* implies that Abel's offering encompassed "one with the other": the essence was presented to God, while a portion was given to the Other Side. Cain, however, perpetrated the reverse, offering the essence to the demonic *end of days* and only a portion to God. See *Zohar* 1:54b. For a different interpretation, see *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

By providing a portion to the Other Side, one ensures that the demonic force will be occupied, assuaged, and deterred from interfering in the realm of holiness. On this theme, see *Sifra, Shemini, millu'im* 1:3, 43c; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 16:8; Moses of Burgos, *Ammud ha-Semali*, 158–59; *Zohar* 1:11a, 64a–65a, 89b (*ST*), 113b–114b, 138b, 145b, 174b, 190a, 210b, 247b; 2:33a, 111b, 130a, 141a, 152b, 154b, 157a–b, 169a, 184b–185a, 203b, 227a–b, 237b–238a, 242b, 266b, 269a; 3:63a–b (*Piq*), 101b–102a, 202b–203a, 224a–b, 258b–259a; *ZḤ* 20c (*MhN*), 46c, 86b–c (*MhN, Rut*), 87b–c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 165–67; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 124–27; idem, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 49; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:453–54, 3:890–95, 959; below, note 97.

According to rabbinic law, sacrificial portions and fat that were not totally consumed by fire during the day can be burnt on the altar throughout the night. According to the *Zohar*, such portions are intended to nourish the

demonic power. Here, Rabbi Shim'on applies this principle to the fat of Abel's offering. See M *Berakhot* 1:1; BT *Berakhot* 26b; *Zohar* 2:130a, 141a, 162a, 238b; *ZḤ* 46c.

45. ***His sons used to hold a feast…*** The verses read: *His sons used to hold a feast, each in his house on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. When the days of feasting had run their course, Job would send and sanctify them, rising early and offering ascent offerings according to the number of them all. For Job thought, "Perhaps my children have sinned by blaspheming God in their hearts." This Job did continually.*

Rabbi Shim'on indicates that the Other Side relishes all kinds of feasting and indulgence.

46. **he offered ascent offerings…** Job's error was that he offered עולות (*olot*), *ascent offerings*, which, being totally consumed on the altar, provide nothing for the Other Side. If he had included a portion for the demonic power, then Satan would have been assuaged. Cf. *Zohar* 1:11a.

The ascent offering, which must be a male animal, rises toward the upper *sefirot*. Here, Rabbi Shim'on implies that a female offering may include a portion for the Other Side. On the ascent offering's being male, see Leviticus 1:3, 10.

47. **Had he given a portion to all…** Then the demonic forces would have been assuaged and Satan would not have tormented Job. God enabled Satan to harm Job because the latter failed to reveal divine light, as explained below. The Temple symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is vulnerable to the Other Side. For the verse in Job, see above, note 45.

48. **But he did not want another to be nourished…** Job shunned evil so much that he refused to offer anything to the Other Side. But his extremism had dire consequences: Satan, having been deprived of his portion, exacted retribution from Job by attacking him and thus "taking what was his."

The “foreskin” symbolizes the demonic power that conceals the shining covenant of *Yesod*, the divine phallus and site of the covenant of circumcision.

On God arousing Satan, see above, note 42. The opening verse of Job reads in full: *There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. And that man was blameless and upright, revering God and shunning evil*. For the full text of Job 1:8 (which includes the same description of Job’s character), see above, note 42.

49. **When the blessed Holy One wished to unite with Israel…** As Israel was about to be liberated from Egyptian bondage, God wished to unite with them; but the demonic power (symbolized by foreskin) still covered the divine light. God commanded the male Israelites to circumcise themselves (removing the foreskin) and to consume the Passover sacrifice quickly. Meanwhile, Satan occupied himself with Job, “taking what was his” and no longer interfering in Israel’s offering to God nor impeding the union between God and Israel.

On the interaction between God, Satan, and Job during the Exodus, see *Shemot Rabbah* 21:7: “[*YHVH said to Moses*,] *‘Why are you crying out to Me*? [*Speak to the Children of Israel and have them journey forward!*]’ (Exodus 14:15)…. Rabbi Ḥama son of Ḥanina said, ‘When Israel came out of Egypt, the angel Samael [identical with Satan] arose to accuse them.’ And Rabbi Ḥama son of Ḥanina explained this in the name of his father: ‘This can be compared to a shepherd who was bringing his sheep across a river. A wolf came to attack the sheep. The shepherd, who was experienced—what did he do? He took a large billy goat and gave it to the wolf, thinking, “Let him wrestle with this until we cross the river, and afterward I will bring it across.” Similarly when Israel came out of Egypt, the angel Samael arose to accuse them, saying before the blessed Holy One, “Master of the World! Until now, they were worshiping idols, and now You are splitting the sea for

them?” What did the blessed Holy One do? He handed over to him Job, who was one of Pharaoh’s advisers, of whom is written *a man blameless and upright* (Job 1:8); and He said to him, *Here, he is in your hand* (ibid. 2:6). The blessed Holy One thought, “While he occupies himself with Job, Israel will go through the sea, and afterward I will deliver Job.”… Job said… “He handed me over to Satan. In order that Israel would not emerge guilty in judgment, He wrung me out through his hand.”… At that moment, the blessed Holy One said to Moses, “Moses! Look, I have handed Job over to Satan. What should you do? *Speak to the Children of Israel and have them journey forward!*”’” See above, note 42.

On consuming the Passover sacrifice in haste, see Exodus 12:11: *Thus shall you eat it: your hips girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand, and you shall eat it in haste. It is a passover offering to* YHVH. See *Targum Onqelos*, ad loc.

According to rabbinic tradition, the Israelites circumcised themselves before leaving Egypt. See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 5; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 12:13; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:6; 7:4; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:12; 5:2; *Rut Rabbah* 6:1; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 29; *Shemot Rabbah* 17:3; 19:5; *Zohar* 2:35b, 41a (*Piq*); 3:91b, 95a–b. Cf. Exodus 12:44, 48; Joshua 5:5. On Satan “taking what was his,” see the preceding note.

50. ***No molten gods… The Festival of matsot…*** What is the connection between these two consecutive verses? The *Zohar* explains that anyone who violates Passover, the Festival of *matsot* (unleavened bread), by eating *ḥamets* (leavened stuff) is considered as if he committed idolatry. The mystery is that *ḥamets* symbolizes the Other Side, who is represented by false gods.

On the link between the two consecutive verses in Exodus, see BT *Pesaḥim* 118a. Cf. *Zohar* 2:124a. The second verse reads in full: *The Festival of matsot shall you keep. Seven days you shall eat matsot as I commanded you,*

at the fixed time of the month of the New Grain, for in the month of the New Grain you came out of Egypt.

51. **When Israel went out of Egypt…** They left the demonic domain of the Egyptians, which is associated with *ḥamets*. Idolatry itself is called *ḥamets*, which is identified with the evil impulse, because this impulse begins like a bit of leaven, offering small temptations, and then swells within a person, gradually overwhelming him. The verse in Psalms, which is usually understood to mean *There shall be no alien god* בך (*vekha*), *among you*, is read here hyperliterally: *There shall be no alien god vekha, within you*.

On leaven as the evil impulse, see the prayer attributed to Rabbi Tanḥum in JT *Berakhot* 4:2, 7d: "May it be Your will, *YHVH* my God and God of my fathers, that You break and destroy the yoke of the evil impulse from our heart. For You created us to do Your will, and we must do Your will; You desire it and we desire it. So who prevents it? The leaven in the dough."

See BT *Berakhot* 17a, and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *se'or she-ba-issah*; *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Noaḥ* 4; *Zohar* 1:142a–b, 226b; 2:40a, 40b–41a (*Piq*), 183a–b; 3:12b, 95b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 132 (and Wolfson's note); Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:189. Cf. Naḥmanides on Leviticus 23:17.

On the identification of the evil impulse with the Other Side, see BT *Bava Batra* 16a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "Satan, the evil impulse, and the Angel of Death are one and the same."

On the location of the evil impulse in the innards (literally, "intestines"), see *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 16. On the gradual dominating influence of the evil impulse, see *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 3; BT *Shabbat* 105b. On the hyperliteral reading of the verse in Psalms as referring to the evil impulse, see JT *Nedarim* 9a, 41b; BT *Shabbat* 105b; *Zohar* 3:106a–b; *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*).

52. ***Desist from a human…*** See BT *Berakhot* 14a, in the name of Rav: “Whoever greets his fellow before praying [the *Amidah*] has, as it were, made him into a cult site, as is said: *Desist from a human, whose breath is in his nostrils, for* במה (*va-meh*), *of what, account is he?* Do not read במה (*va-meh*), *of what*, but rather במה (*bamah*), *a cult site.*” In other words, by greeting a human being before acknowledging God, one is in effect idolizing that person, who *is accounted as a cult site*. Rather, one should *desist from a human* until after praying.

Rabbi Yehudah quotes a different verse (from Proverbs) as a proof-text for this rabbinic teaching. He acknowledges that the interpretation of the verse in Isaiah is also “fine,” but he wonders about the precise meaning of the phrase אשר נשמה באפו (*asher neshamah be-appo*), *whose breath is in his nostrils*.

On the passage in *Berakhot*, see *Zohar* 1:228a, 248a; 2:226b; 3:190b; *ZḤ* 90d–91a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 35; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 42 (50–51); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 375–76; idem, *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, 16. On the term *bamah*, see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 3:2316–18.

53. **Here the blessed Holy One commands a person…** To *desist from a human* who mars his soul with the “alien defilement” of the Other Side.

The human body resembles the sefirotic body, in whose image it is created. The soul has three aspects: *nefesh* (“soul,” animating the human being), *ruaḥ* (spirit, breath), and *neshamah* (breath, soul). Each of these derives respectively from its own sefirotic source: *Shekhinah, Tif’eret*, and *Binah*. Just as these three *sefirot* are united, so are the three aspects of soul. A person’s virtuous acts enhance all three aspects, whereas his evil acts defile all three.

On the three aspects of the soul, see *Zohar* 1:62a, 81a (*ST*), 83a–b, 206a; 2:95a–b, 141b–142b; 3:25a, 70b; *ZḤ* 6d

(*MhN*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:684–722. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 14:9; *Devarim Rabbah* 2:37.

54. **If we see a person…** Everyone is born with a *nefesh*, but *ruaḥ* and *neshamah* must be achieved. Yet even someone who has attained all three aspects of soul must strive to maintain their purity. How can one determine if a person has reached this advanced state? By seeing whether he can control his temper. If someone is overwhelmed by anger, in effect he has uprooted his *neshamah* (the holiest aspect of soul) and supplanted it with *an alien god*, a wrathful spirit. Rabbi Yehudah reads the verse in Isaiah as follows: *Desist from a human* אשר נשמה באפו (*asher neshamah be-appo*), *who* [has exchanged his] *neshamah for his anger*.

See BT *Eruvin* 65b, in the name of Rabbi Ila'i: "By three things is a person's character known: by his cup [i.e., how much he drinks, or the effect this has on him], by his pocket [i.e., how he spends], and by his anger."

On the relation between anger and idolatry, see BT *Shabbat* 105b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 3; Maimonides, Commentary on the Mishnah, *Avot* 2:9; idem, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot De'ot* 2:3; *Zohar* 1:27b (*TZ*); 3:179a (*RM*), 234b (*RM*); *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*); *TZ* 56, 89b; Moses de León, *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, 33.

On the phrase *alien god*, see Psalms 81:10: *There shall be no alien god* בך (*vekha*), *among you*—which can be read hyperliterally: *There shall be no alien god vekha, within you*. See above, note 51.

55. ***For* במה (*va-meh*), *of what, account is he*?…** Rabbi Yehudah relies on the Talmudic reading of this verse (quoted above, note 52): *Desist from a human, whose breath is in his nostrils* [or, as understood here: *who* [has exchanged his] *neshamah for his anger*], *for he is accounted as* במה (*bamah*), *a cult site*. The anger raging within such a person is idolatrous, perhaps because it signifies arrogant pride, which challenges God.

On not gazing at the face of an angry person, see *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Margaliot), par. 1126.

56. **But what about anger of the sages?...** Such righteous indignation is permitted and actually positive if it occurs in heated debate over Torah or is directed against those who defame Torah. On Torah inflaming a sage, see BT *Ta'anit* 4a.

57. **This was only for a moment...** One might claim that anger often passes quickly, and then the person returns to his normal state. However, the demonic power fueling anger persists within him, and even after intense effort there is no guarantee that the person will regain the pristine holiness of his *neshamah*.

58. **He really does become holy!** Rabbi Yose insists that through sustained effort one can regain holiness.

59. **what about all the defiled who are purified?** In many other cases the defilement of sin can be overcome.

60. **Any other defilement is different...** Only in the case of anger is the soul itself defiled—and actually replaced by the demonic power fueling anger.

On the creative reading of the verse from Isaiah, see above, notes 52, 55.

61. ***No molten gods shall you make for yourself...*** This command against idolatry now implies that one should not succumb to anger, thereby harming himself. The following verse alludes to the holiness of *neshamah*, which must be guarded and kept.

On the link between the two consecutive verses in Exodus, see above, note 50.

62. ***The Festival of matsot* תשמר (*tishmor*), *you shall keep...*** *Matsah* (unleavened bread) symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is linked with the verb שמור (*shamor*), *keep*. This latter connection is based on two alternative versions of the Ten Commandments. The first version reads: זכור (*Zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath day to hallow it* (Exodus 20:8). The second version reads: שמור (*Shamor*), *Keep, the Sabbath day*

to hallow it (Deuteronomy 5:12). For the kabbalist, *zakhor, remember*, suggests זכר (*zakhar*), "male," signifying the male divine potency (centered in *Tif'eret*), whereas the alternative formulation, *shamor, keep*, signifies the female, *Shekhinah*.

See BT *Berakhot* 20b; *Bahir* 124 (182); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 496–97; Naḥmanides on Exodus 20:8; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Sefer ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittaḥon*, 420; *Zohar* 1:5b, 47b, 48b, 164b, 199b, 248a; 2:70b, 91a, 92a–b, 92a–b (*Piq*), 138a, 165b; 3:81b, 92b (*Piq*), 115b, 224a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 118; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 110; Wolfson, introduction to *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 63–71.

63. ***Seven days...*** The seven days of *Pesaḥ* symbolize seven lower entities, the various aspects or angelic powers of *Shekhinah*, whereas the seven days of *Sukkot* symbolize seven higher entities, the seven *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah* (or from *Binah* through *Yesod*). The higher status of the days of *Sukkot* is reflected in the fact that throughout this festival the complete *Hallel* is recited (consisting of Psalms 113–18), whereas on the intermediate and last days of *Pesaḥ* the *Hallel* is recited in an abbreviated form (omitting the first parts of Psalm 115 and Psalm 116).

The complete union of the higher *sefirot* with *Shekhinah* occurs on the Festival of *Shavu'ot*, seven weeks after the beginning of *Pesaḥ*. Until then, "those higher days [have] not yet settled" upon Her, and this incomplete state is signified in the verse from Exodus by the deficient spelling of the word מצת (*matsot*), which lacks the letter ו (*vav*)—whose numerical value of six symbolizes the six higher sefirotic days: *Tif'eret* and the five *sefirot* surrounding Him, from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*.

Actually, in the Masoretic text the word מצות (*matsot*) is spelled with a *vav*, although in Exodus 13:6 the identical clause appears with the word spelled deficiently: מצת (*matsot*). See *Zohar* 2:40a (Vol. 4, p. 196, n. 195), 41b (*Piq*); *Minḥat Shai* on Exodus 12:15, 18; 23:15; Leviticus 2:4;

7:12; Numbers 9:11; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 50, 131–32, n. 125.

On the complete and incomplete *Hallel*, see BT *Ta'anit* 28b, *Arakhin* 10a–b; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Proverbs 960; *Zohar* 2:277b (*Tosafot*); 3:95b; *TZ* 13, 28b.

64. **Once this Festival of *matsot* has been sanctified...** Once Passover has begun and the complete *Hallel* has been recited (both on Passover eve and on the first day), how can there be a descent in holiness, marked by the abbreviated form of *Hallel* that is recited on the intermediate and last days of the festival? This seems to contradict the rabbinic principle "One raises [or: increases, promotes] in holiness, and does not lower."

In its original context, this principle means that one should progress from a lesser to a greater degree of holiness and not the reverse, or that a person may be promoted to a higher or more dignified level but not demoted. See M *Sheqalim* 6:4; BT *Berakhot* 28a, *Shabbat* 21b, *Yoma* 20b, 73a, *Megillah* 21b, *Horayot* 12b; *Zohar* 2:132b; 3:152b–153a, 162b, 285a.

65. ***He shall atone for himself...*** On Yom Kippur the high priest atones first for himself and then for his household. Similarly, *Shekhinah* (symbolized by Passover) sanctifies Herself at the beginning of the festival and then must descend in order to sanctify the angelic powers constituting Her household (symbolized by the remaining days of the festival). Israel helps to effect this process by celebrating the festival, by reciting the incomplete *Hallel*, and by counting the seven weeks of the Omer from the second night of *Pesaḥ* until the eve of *Shavu'ot*. Once *Shekhinah*'s entire angelic household has been sanctified, Israel ascends together with *Shekhinah* and Her cohort to unite with the higher sefirotic days on the Festival of *Shavu'ot*.

66. **Therefore we perform the count standing upright...** In order to signify and imitate the higher, male days, one must stand when counting the days of the Omer,

which culminate in the union of *Shekhinah* with the higher days. So too during any prayer that pertains to those sefirotic days (such as the *Amidah* and the praises of the *Hallel*).

The sefirotic pair *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* are the divine thighs up "there," while *Tif'eret* is the torso. The final sentence means that another reason for standing is to honor the higher *sefirot*.

On standing during the Counting of the Omer, see *Leqaḥ Tov*, Leviticus 23:16; *Zohar* 3:97b (*Piq*). On standing or sitting during various prayers, see *Zohar* 1:132b; 2:132b–133a.

67. **Since it is mystery of the male...** Since the Counting of the Omer pertains to the higher, male days, women are exempt from this commandment. Similarly, only male Israelites are commanded to appear at the Temple on the three pilgrimage festivals, since this appearance focuses on *Yesod*, the divine phallus and site of the covenant of circumcision.

On women being exempt from counting the Omer, see *Zohar* 3:97b (*Piq*); *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 66. On women being exempt from "appearing" at the Temple on the pilgrimage festivals, see M *Ḥagigah* 1:1; *Zohar* 3:168a.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *Three times a year all your males shall appear in the presence of the Lord YHVH*. On the connection between this verse and *Yesod*, see *Zohar* 2:124a; 3:165b.

68. **from every seven of these high days...** During each week of the Counting of the Omer, seven aspects of one of the seven *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* to *Shekhinah* convey holiness to one of the lower days (i.e., to one of the seven aspects, or angelic maidens, of *Shekhinah*). As each one of these seven lower days is endowed with שבע (*sheva*), "seven," higher aspects, it is called שבוע (*shavu'a*), "a week." At the end of seven weeks, all forty-nine higher aspects are manifested in

the seven lower days. In the verse from Leviticus the feminine verb תהיינה (*tihyenah*), *shall they be*, alludes to the female aspects of *Shekhinah*.

The context in Leviticus (23:15–16) reads: *You shall count from the morrow of the sabbath, from the day you bring the sheaf of elevation, seven whole sabbaths* [or: *weeks*] *shall they be. Until the morrow of the seventh sabbath* [or: *week*] *you shall count fifty days, and you shall bring a new grain offering to YHVH*. The phrase "until, but not including, the consummation," is based on the wording in verse 16: (*Until the morrow*…) and refers to the practice of counting forty-nine days and not the fiftieth day, which is the Festival of *Shavu'ot*. See Rashi on Leviticus 23:16; *Tosafot* on BT *Menaḥot* 65b, s.v. *katuv eḥad*; Asher ben Yeḥiel on BT *Pesaḥim* 10:40.

69. **When they have been sanctified…** When the seven lower days of *Shekhinah* have been sanctified as weeks and the entire house of *Shekhinah* has been arranged and prepared for the union of the divine couple, then the Festival of *Shavu'ot* (Weeks) begins. Israel shares in the sanctification, so the festival is called *your Weeks*.

The full verse in Numbers reads: *On the day of First Fruits, when you bring an offering of new grain to YHVH in your Festival of Weeks, a sacred assembly shall you have, no task of work shall you do*.

70. **when forty-nine days have been reached…** The forty-nine days of the Omer symbolize the forty-nine aspects of the seven lower *sefirot* (from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*), while the fiftieth day (*Shavu'ot*) symbolizes *Binah*, the Divine Mother, above them. From Her issues Torah, symbolizing *Tif'eret*, core of the lower *sefirot*. The Festival of *Shavu'ot* commemorates the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, and fittingly Torah includes forty-nine facets. Revelation is stimulated by Israel below.

According to one rabbinic tradition, every divine utterance of Torah includes "forty-nine facets [literally,

faces] of ‘pure’ and forty-nine facets of ‘impure’”—that is, forty-nine ways by which something can be proven impure (and thus forbidden), and forty-nine ways by which the same thing can be proven pure (and thus permitted).

See *Massekhet Soferim* 16:5; JT *Sanhedrin* 4:1, 22a; BT *Eruvin* 13b; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 26:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:2, 4; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:4; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 8:1; *Tanḥuma, Bemidbar* 10, *Ḥuqqat* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥuqqat* 7, 18; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:2; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 14, 58a–b, 62b; 21, 101a–b; *Midrash Tehillim* 12:4; *Zohar* 2:15b (*MhN*), 83b, 123a, 139b; 3:97b (*Piq*).

According to another rabbinic tradition, Torah has “seventy faces.” See *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:354); *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:16; Vol. 4, p. 462, n. 343.

The number fifty is frequently associated with *Binah*, based on a statement attributed to Rav and Shemu’el (BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 21b, *Nedarim* 38a): “Fifty gates of *binah* (understanding) were created in the world, and all were given to Moses except for one, as is said: *You made him little less than God* (Psalms 8:6).” See Naḥmanides, *Peirush al ha-Torah*, intro, 3–4; *Zohar* 1:3b.

71. ***Even the bird has found a house…*** Some birds nest in a house, such as the דרור (*deror*), *swallow*, whose name also means “release, freedom.”

The period of fifty days, after which the swallow’s young are “released,” corresponds to the fifty years of the Jubilee. According to the Bible, every seventh year is a Sabbatical, during which the land must lie fallow and at the end of which all debts are remitted (Leviticus 25:1–24; Deuteronomy 15:1–3). After seven Sabbaticals comes the Jubilee, when slaves are released and land reverts to its original owner (Leviticus 25:8–55). In Kabbalah the Sabbatical symbolizes *Shekhinah* (seventh of the lower *sefirot*), while the Jubilee symbolizes *Binah*, who is frequently

characterized by the number fifty; see the end of the preceding note.

Leviticus 25:10 reads in full: *You shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim* דרור (*deror*), *freedom* [or: *a release*], *in the land to all of its inhabitants. A jubilee it shall be for you, and you shall go back each man to his holding, and each man to his clan you shall go back*. See *Targum Onqelos*, ad loc.; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 9b.

On the swallow dwelling in a house, see BT *Shabbat* 106b. The verse in Psalms concludes: *by Your altars, YHVH of Hosts, my king and my God*.

72. ***You shall hallow the fiftieth year…*** As explained in the preceding note, the Jubilee symbolizes *Binah*, who is the source of freedom and redemption. From Her issues Torah, symbolizing *Tif'eret*, and Torah is called "freedom," based on a midrashic interpretation of the verse in Exodus, which describes the tablets given to Moses on Mount Sinai: *The tablets were the work of God; the writing was the writing of God, engraved upon the tablets*. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:3: "חרות (*Ḥarut*), *Engraved, upon the tablets*. Do not read חרות (*ḥarut*), *engraved*, but rather חירות (*ḥeirut*), *freedom*. Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Neḥemiah, and the Rabbis: Rabbi Yehudah said, 'Freedom from the Angel of Death.' Rabbi Neḥemiah said, 'Freedom from kingdoms.' The Rabbis said, 'Freedom from suffering.'"

The Divine Mother, *Binah*, is symbolized by the first (or upper) ה (*he*) in the name יהוה (*YHVH*), while Her daughter, *Shekhinah*, is symbolized by the second ה (*he*). The latter is symbolized by Sabbatical, while the former is symbolized by Jubilee, as explained in the preceding note.

On *ḥarut* and *ḥeirut*, see *Avot* 6:2; BT *Eruvin* 54a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:6; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 16, *Eqev* 8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 9; *Shemot Rabbah* 41:7; *Zohar* 1:37b, 63b, 131b–132a; 2:45b, 113b–114a; 3:6b, 176a.

73. **Israel ate two types of bread…** When Israel came out of Egypt, they ate *matsah*, symbolizing *Shekhinah;* in the Sinai Desert they ate manna, symbolizing *Tif'eret* (who is known as *heaven*). The manna prepared the Israelites to receive Torah (which symbolizes *Tif'eret*). Corresponding to the manna, on *Shavu'ot* two loaves of bread were brought as an offering of first fruits, along with animal sacrifices.

On the sefirotic significance of *matsah* and manna, see *Zohar* 1:157a–b; 2:40a–b, 61b–63a; Hecker, *Mystical Bodies, Mystical Meals*, 82–115. On the link between manna and Torah, see the statement attributed to Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai in *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 2: "Only to those who eat manna is it given to expound the Torah." See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ, Petiḥta; Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:4. In several medieval citations of this statement, the wording is "Only to those who eat manna was the Torah given." See Rashi on 2 Chronicles 31:4; Joshua ibn Shuaib, *Derashot, Tsav*.

The verses in Leviticus read: *From your dwelling places you shall bring two loaves of elevation bread, two-tenths of a measure of semolina they shall be, leavened they shall be baked, first fruits to YHVH. You shall offer with the bread seven unblemished yearling lambs and one bull from the herd and two rams. They shall be an ascent offering to YHVH and their grain offering and their libations, a fire offering, a fragrant odor to YHVH*.

74. **On *Pesaḥ* Israel left the bread called *ḥamets*, leavened stuff…** All leaven (which symbolizes the demonic power) is forbidden on *Pesaḥ*, in honor of *matsah*, symbolizing *Shekhinah*. Why then, on *Shavu'ot*—which is linked with the higher nourishment of manna and Torah—is *ḥamets* permitted? Moreover, why is *ḥamets* actually brought as an offering? Furthermore, the revelation at Sinai liberated Israel from the evil impulse, which is symbolized by *ḥamets*, so the presence of leaven is troubling.

On the demonic quality of *ḥamets* and its identification with the evil impulse, see above, note 51. On the elimination of the evil impulse at Sinai, see BT *Shabbat* 145b–146a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:15 (on 1:2); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 41, 174a; *Zohar* 1:52a–b; 2:168a, 193b; 3:97b (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 139 (and Wolfson's note).

Exodus 12:15 reads in full: *Seven days shall you eat unleavened bread; surely on the first day you shall remove leaven, from your houses, for whoever eats* חמץ (*ḥamets*), *leavened stuff, that person will be cut off from Israel—from the first day to the seventh day*.

75. **Similarly, when Israel went out of Egypt…** Still suffering from a slave mentality, the Israelites were ignorant of true faith; so God prescribed for them the remedy of *matsah* and forbade the presence of any *ḥamets*. Once they were cured and purified, they were permitted to eat *ḥamets*—especially since at Sinai, on the first *Shavu'ot*, they could taste the supernal nourishment of Torah, the ultimate cure.

"Should be visible" and "is suitable" each renders אתחזי (*itḥazei*), which bears both meanings. The author may be playing on Exodus 13:7: *No ḥamets, leavened stuff*, יראה (*yera'eh*), *shall be seen, with you* (Exodus 13:7), quoted above at note 74. See *Targum Onqelos*, ad loc.

76. **Therefore *ḥamets* is offered to be burnt on the altar…** Actually, the *two* [leavened] *loaves of elevation bread* mentioned in Leviticus 23:17 were not burnt on the altar, but rather given to the priests. Attempting to resolve the *Zohar*'s apparent contradiction of a biblical principle that no leaven can be offered on the altar, *Miqdash Melekh* interprets the text as follows: the subsequent phrase "two other loaves" refers to the *two loaves of elevation bread*, which were not burned on the altar (and were offered eventually to the priests), whereas *ḥamets* refers to the demonic evil impulse, which was burned and thus eliminated.

For various other interpretations and responses, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Sullam*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1279, n. 447; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On the demonic quality of *ḥamets* and its identification with the evil impulse, see above, note 51. On the elimination of the evil impulse at Sinai, see above, note 74. On the prohibition against offering leaven on the altar, see Exodus 23:18; 34:25; Leviticus 2:11; 6:10; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 3:2003.

77. **Israel cleaves to the blessed Holy One on this day...** On *Shavu'ot*, Israel cleaves to God through the remedy of Torah, which was given on this day. If Israel preserved *matsah* and manna (symbolizing respectively *Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret*), they would be immune from harsh judgment on Rosh Hashanah. Such judgment awaits those who have neglected the remedy of Torah and been seduced by the evil impulse (symbolized by *ḥamets*)—for example, by eating *ḥamets* rather than *matsah* on Passover. On the annual Day of Judgment, Satan (likewise symbolized by *ḥamets*) accuses those who have succumbed to the evil impulse.

On *matsah* and manna, see above, note 73. On the identification of Satan with the evil impulse, see above, note 51.

78. **He let them taste the supernal bread...** The manna (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) prepared Israel to receive Torah, which is linked with the same *sefirah*. See above, note 73.

79. **strapped to your back...** "Strapped" renders קופטרך (*qufterakh*). In the *Zohar* the roots קפטר (*qftr*) and קטפר (*qtfr*) often convey the sense of "tying, binding, linking." See *Zohar* 1:177a, 211a, 217a, 218a, 219b; 2:209a; 3:6b, 59b, 62b; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 188, n. 185; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *qftr, qaftera*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 349–54.

On *quftera* as "rope," see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 4:2 (and Margulies' n. 3, pp. 81–82); *Qohelet Rabbah* on 6:6;

Tanḥuma, Miqqets 10; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Miqqets* 15 (and Buber's n. 116); *Arukh* and *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *pi turei*; Rashi on *Berakhot* 8a, s.v. *ke-fiturei*.

80. **My abode was among those hermits…** For other references to such practices, see *Zohar* 3:56b, 149b–150a; *ZḤ* 8d (*MhN*). Cf. Baḥya ibn Paquda's discussion of ascetic isolation in *Ḥovot ha-Levavot, Sha'ar ha-Perishut*, 1–7; and Philo's description of the Therapeutae (healers, worshipers), an ascetic community devoted to the contemplative life, in *De vita contemplativa*.

81. **to sit in the shade…** To dwell in the sukkah on the festival of *Sukkot*, celebrated during the month of Tishrei, which according to the Bible is the seventh lunar month.

On the sukkah as shade, cf. the Talmudic term מטללתא (*matlalta*), "sukkah, cover," based on the root טלל (*tll*), "to provide shade." See BT *Sukkah* 14b, 28b–29a.

82. ***And in the desert that you have seen…*** When the Israelites went out of Egypt, *Shekhinah*—known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom) and symbolized by the moon—was strengthened, while the demonic force (known as "wicked kingdom" and symbolized by the serpent) was defeated. God then led the Israelites through the Sinai Desert in order to completely break the power of the demonic serpent, who dwells there. However, Israel's failures enabled the serpent to attack them throughout their forty years of wandering, corresponding to the forty lashes administered by a court of law, according to Deuteronomy 25:3.

The "total of six hundred thousand" refers to the approximate number of male Israelites who went out of Egypt, according to Exodus 12:37.

On demonic control of the desert (and the Sinai Desert in particular), see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 32:10; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 17:7; *Zohar* 1:14b, 126a, 169b, 178b, 228a; 2:21a (*MhN*), 60a, 157a, 236b–237a; 3:63b.

On the exact number of lashes, see M *Makkot* 3:10; *Tanḥuma, Qoraḥ* 12; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 18:21; Maimonides,

Mishneh Torah, *Hilkhot Sanhedrin* 17:1; *Zohar* 1:61b; 2:249b (*Heikh*); *Or Yaqar*.

The context in Deuteronomy 1 (30–31) reads: *YHVH your God who goes before you, He will battle for you as all that He did with you in Egypt before your very eyes, and in the desert that you have seen, where YHVH your God carried you as a man carries his son, all the way that you went until coming to this place*. Note the parallel between the wording *YHVH… carried you as a man carries his son* and the description of the old man "holding a little boy."

The verse in Deuteronomy 8 describes God's miraculous protection of Israel: *Who leads you through the great and terrible desert—fiery serpents and scorpions, and thirst, where there is no water—Who brings water out for you from flinty rock*.

The verse in Genesis records God's curse against the serpent: *Enmity I will set between you and the woman, between your seed and hers. He will bruise you on the head, and you will bruise him in the heel*. Here, *the head* alludes to Israel's striking the serpent "first," while *the heel* alludes to the serpent's attack in the "end."

83. **they saw that master of the desert…** They saw the demonic serpent defeated and bound.

The full verse in Exodus describes the reaction of various peoples to the miraculous Exodus and the splitting of the Red Sea: *Then the chiefs of Edom were terrified; the dukes of Moab, trembling seized them; all the dwellers of Canaan melted away*. Here, *the chiefs of Edom* are identified with the demonic powers, headed by the serpent. For the full verse in Deuteronomy, see the preceding note.

84. **where we study Torah in order to subdue that side…** The Other Side, the demonic power. The most perfect form of worship is not fleeing from evil but rather grappling with it and overcoming it. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1421–22.

On Torah as a means of overcoming the evil or demonic force, see BT *Sukkah* 52b: “A scholar from the school of Rabbi Yishma’el taught, ‘If this repulsive one [i.e., the evil impulse] attacks you, drag him to the house of study. If he is of stone, he will dissolve; if of iron, he will shatter.’”

On light issuing only from darkness, see *Zohar* 1:32a; 2:115b (*RM*), 187a; 3:47b. On the relation between the desert and Torah, see *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 21: “Who preserves the Torah? One who makes himself like the desert and divests himself of everything.” See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:26: “Who preserves the Torah? One who makes himself like the desert and withdraws himself from everything.” See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:20: “Why was the Torah given in the Sinai Desert? To teach you that unless a person makes himself ownerless like the desert, he will not attain words of Torah.” Cf. BT *Eruvin* 54a, *Nedarim* 55a; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥuqqat* 49; *Midrash Tehillim* 5:1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 1:7; *Midrash Aggadah*, Numbers 21:18.

85. **Now that the time has come for worship…** During the month of Tishrei, which includes Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and *Sukkot*. Rosh Hashanah is the Day of Judgment, when the demonic serpent accuses Israel of their sins and demands justice from God. At such a dangerous time, the hermits prefer to leave the serpent’s stronghold in the desert and return to civilization.

86. ***Blast the shofar on the new moon…*** The new moon of Tishrei marks Rosh Ha-shanah, the Day of Judgment, when the *sefirah* of *Din* (Judgment) is aroused. This arousal empowers the demonic force, which accuses Israel of their sins and obscures the light of *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the moon.

The verse in Psalms reads: *Blast the shofar on the new moon*, בכסה (*ba-keseh*) *for our festival day*. The rare word *ba-keseh* is often understood as referring to the full moon, but in rabbinic literature it is derived from the root כסה (*ksh*), “to cover,” and applies to the new moon (specifically, the new

moon of Tishrei), when the moon is almost totally concealed. The old man follows this interpretation.

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:6; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 8a–b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:6; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 7; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 39, 166a; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:5; *Zohar* 1:114b; 3:98b–99a (*Piq*), 100b, 231b, 275a.

87. **Why is supernal Judgment aroused...** All depends on *Binah*, who is the seventh *sefirah* counting up from *Yesod* and is also known as the World that is Coming. At the beginning of each new year, She examines the deeds of Israel ("those below") to determine whether they have succeeded in mending the world. If they have not, She stops illumining the lower *sefirot* until the wicked are identified and punished.

The full verse in Job reads: *He puts an end to darkness; every extremity* [or: *termination*] *he explores—rock of pitch-black gloom*. (This section of Job [28:3–11] is traditionally understood as referring to God's penetration of the mysteries of nature, though more likely it refers to human mining operations in remote volcanic regions.) Here, the word תכלית (*takhlit*), *extremity* [or: *termination*], is understood by the old man as *extermination*, based on the root כלה (*klh*), "to destroy." Thus, *every termination* [or: *extermination*] *he* [i.e., Satan] *searches out* and seeks. See *Zohar* 2:33a–b.

עלמא דאתי (*Alma de-atei*) is the Aramaic equivalent of the rabbinic Hebrew העולם הבא (*ha-olam ha-ba*), "the world that is coming." This term has often been understood as referring to the hereafter and often been translated as "the world to come." From another point of view, however, "the world that is coming" already exists, occupying another dimension. See *Tanḥuma, Vayiqra* 8: "The wise call it *ha-olam ha-ba* not because it does not exist now, but for us today in this world it is still to come." See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Teshuvah* 8:8; and Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, 37: "'The world to come' does not succeed 'this

world’ in time, but exists from eternity as a reality outside and above time, to which the soul ascends.”

In Kabbalah “the world that is coming” often refers to *Binah*, the continuous source of emanation. See *Zohar* 3:290b (*IZ*): “the World that is Coming, constantly coming, never ceasing.” Cf. *Bahir* 106 (160); Asher ben David, *Peirush Shelosh Esreh Middot*, in *Kabbalah* 2 (1997): 293; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 26 (30); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot*, 375; *Zohar* 1:83a, 92a, 141b.

88. **Why?...** Why is the demonic force empowered? This is all part of the divine plan, stimulating Israel to act and repent. When they blow the shofar on Rosh Hashanah, its sound pierces all the firmaments and reaches the demonic power (“that mighty rock”) that obscures the light of *Shekhinah*. Israel’s sincere devotion arouses Compassion, and when the Other Side perceives this, he is confounded. The earthly shofar stimulates the sefirotic shofar (*Binah*), which emits Compassion (*Tif’eret*), also known as קול (*qol*), “voice, sound.”

On confounding Satan, see BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16a–b: “Why do we sound a plain blast and a tremolo blast while sitting and then again while standing? In order to confound Satan.”

See Rabbeinu Ḥananel on BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 35a (cited in *Nitsotsei Zohar*, 3:99b, n. 8); *Arukh*, s.v. *arev*; *Tosafot*, BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16b, s.v. *kedei le-arbev*; *Zohar* 1:114b, 152a (*ST*); 2:196b, 237b–238a; 3:99b (*Piq*); *TZ* 21, 51b.

On the earthly and sefirotic shofars, see *Zohar* 1:114a–b; 2:81b; 3:38b–39a, 99a–b; *ZḤ* 20c (*MhN*). On the principle of “By arousal below, there is similarly arousal above,” see *Zohar* 1:35a, 77b–78a, 82b, 86b, 88a, 156b, 164a–b, 233a, 235a, 244a; 2:31b, 35b, 125a, 232b, 265a; 3:31b, 40a, 47b, 92a–b, 105a, 110b, 112b, 145a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 144.

89. **The lower world is always poised...** *Shekhinah* is prepared to receive light from above, as a gem is ready to reflect. If Her face is made radiant by virtuous human behavior on earth, then She is illumined from above. If She is saddened by human wickedness, then She is colored by harsh Judgment. On *Shekhinah* as "precious stone," see *Zohar* 1:231b; 3:152b.

90. **just as this lower world is aroused...** As *Shekhinah* is aroused by Israel below, so She draws the sefirotic flow from above. The sound (or voice) of the shofar corresponds to the divine voice of *Tif'eret* (Compassion), which includes all three qualities of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* (symbolized respectively by water, fire, and air). As the sound of the earthly shofar ascends, it strikes the precious stone of *Shekhinah*.

On the components of the sound of the shofar, see *Zohar* 1:114a–b; 2:81b; 3:38b, 99b (*Piq*), 261a.

91. **Once She is arrayed...** Once *Shekhinah* is prepared and arrayed by the sound of the earthly shofar, the Compassion of *Tif'eret* issues from the divine shofar (*Binah*) and reaches Her. Thus She is encompassed from the earthly sound below and the divine energy above. On the Other Side being confounded, see above, note 88.

92. **Israel prepares one goat...** The scapegoat prepared on Yom Kippur and sent off to the desert (according to Leviticus 16). The old man soon explains the significance of this goat. On demonic control of the desert, see above, note 82.

93. **Jerusalem stands in the center...** See *Tanḥuma, Qedoshim* 10: "The land of Israel sits in the center of the world, Jerusalem in the center of the land of Israel, the Temple in the center of Jerusalem, the sanctuary in the center of the Temple, the ark in the center of the sanctuary, and in front of the ark the Foundation Stone, from which the world was founded."

See BT *Yoma* 54b, *Sanhedrin* 37a; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Qedoshim* 10; Ibn Ezra on Genesis 1:2; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 18:25; *Zohar* 1:78a, 84b, 226a; 2:157a, 193a; 3:65b, 161b; *TZ* 21, 49b, 50b. Cf. *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 16.

94. **The Kingdom of Heaven…** *Shekhinah*, known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom), includes the entire stream of emanation, issuing from *Binah* (the World that is Coming) and flowing to Herself. Jerusalem is located beneath *Shekhinah*, while (apparently) beneath the higher point of *Binah* lies the earthly Garden of Eden. Whereas Jerusalem is situated in the center of the inhabited world, the Garden is situated in the center of the entire world.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; Zacuto; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On *Binah* as "the World that is Coming," see above, note 87.

95. **in the middle of the Garden of Eden…** The column in the middle of the Garden enables souls to ascend to the celestial Garden of Eden. On water flowing from the Garden, see Genesis 2:10: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads*.

On the column in the middle of the Garden, see *Zohar* 1:39a–b (*Heikh*), 81a (*ST*), 219a; 2:130b, 210a, 211a; 3:185b; Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 64a–b; idem, *Seder Gan Eden*, 132–35, 139–40; Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 101–42. Cf. *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:28).

96. **three points in the world…** The central point of the desolate world (where the Other Side rules), the central point of the inhabited world (Jerusalem), and the central point of the entire world (the Garden of Eden).

"The three points of Torah" are apparently the three vowels חולם (*ḥolem*), שורק (*shuruq*), and חירק (*ḥiriq*), which appear respectively as points above, within, and beneath a letter. See Isaac ha-Kohen, *Ta'amei ha-Nequddot*, 265–68; *Zohar*

1:15b, 17a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 328–30; Judah Ḥayyat, in *Ma'arekhet ha-Elohut*, 136a.

97. **The goat that Israel sends to the desert…** In the original ritual of Yom Kippur (Leviticus 16:7–10), one goat is sacrificed as a purification offering to God, while a scapegoat bearing the sins of Israel is sent off into the desert for the demon Azazel. (Similarly in the Babylonian Akitu ritual, a goat—substituted for a human being—is offered to Ereshkigal, goddess of the Abyss.) According to *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46, the goat of Yom Kippur is intended to preoccupy Satan: "They gave him a bribe on Yom Kippur so that he would not nullify Israel's sacrifice." The *Zohar* develops this theme, teaching that by providing a portion to the Other Side, one ensures that the demonic force will be occupied, assuaged, and deterred from interfering in the realm of holiness.

The old man grants that a goat should be sent to the desert for the Other Side, but he wonders why the same kind of animal is offered to God.

On the theme of assuaging demonic powers by offering them a portion, see above, note 44. The wording "one for *YHVH* and one for that Other Side" reflects Leviticus 16:8: *Aaron shall place lots upon the two goats, one lot for YHVH and one lot for Azazel*.

98. **reconciled with him** With his father, the king.

99. **Therefore…'Prepare two goats…'** This is why the verse in Leviticus states *one… for YHVH and one… for Azazel*. See above, note 97.

100. **When supernal Mother… comes to dwell…** On Yom Kippur, when *Binah* comes to dwell in the palace of *Shekhinah*, the demonic Denouncer is preoccupied elsewhere with his goat, and *Shekhinah* is rejoicing with Israel.

The full verse in Leviticus reads: *For on this day He will effect purging* [or: *atonement*] *for you, to purify you of all your sins; before YHVH you will become pure*. On *Binah* as "the World that is Coming," see above, note 87.

101. ***one lot for YHVH and one lot for Azazel…*** The demonic Denouncer imagines that his portion matches the divine portion, and that he has been invited to share in God's feast; but really he is doomed. Similarly, the wicked Haman was thrilled that he had been invited to dine with King Ahasuerus and Queen Esther; little did he know that at the banquet he would be accused of threatening the Queen's people and soon be hanged.

The context in Proverbs (25:21–22) reads: *If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. For you are heaping burning coals on his head, and YHVH will reward you*. Treating one's enemy well actually ensures his subsequent torment.

102. **when the supernal King comes…** When the divine King (*Tif'eret* or *Binah*) comes to the palace of *Shekhinah*, She pleads for Herself and Israel, just as Queen Esther pleaded before King Ahasuerus (Esther 7:3). Even when the people of Israel are in exile and can no longer offer sacrifices, their sincere prayers stimulate *Shekhinah* to plead for them on Yom Kippur. The blessed Holy One responds by decreeing punishment against Israel's enemies and the elimination of the demonic Other Side, who is identified with the Angel of Death.

מטרונית (*Matronita*) is an aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, "matron, married woman, noble lady," and is often applied in the *Zohar* to *Shekhinah*, the divine wife.

In rabbinic literature the nation of Edom often represents Rome, and in medieval literature it often represents Christianity. On Satan (the Denouncer) as the Angel of Death, see the statement attributed to Resh Lakish in BT *Bava Batra* 16a: "Satan, the evil impulse, and the Angel of Death are one and the same."

103. ***For we have been sold…*** The full verse, recording part of Queen Esther's plea before King Ahasuerus, reads: *For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we*

had merely been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept silent; but the enemy cannot compensate for the damage to the king [or: *for the distress would not justify disturbing the king*].

Here, Queen Esther symbolizes *Shekhinah*, pleading for Israel before the blessed Holy One. The potential *damage to the king* corresponds to the potential damage to God's name if Israel is destroyed. Haman cringing in terror symbolizes the demonic Denouncer cringing and withdrawing in defeat.

The full verse in Joshua reads: *When the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land hear* [that Israel has fled from her enemies], *they will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth. And what will You do for Your great name?*

104. **the people of Israel emerges free on that day…** On Yom Kippur, if they have repented and been purified. Then they rejoice openly on the Festival of *Sukkot*, and even the demonic Other Side delights in their joy. Just as the people offered him the scapegoat on Yom Kippur, now on *Sukkot* they offer seventy bulls, benefiting the seventy heavenly princes and their nations, and ensuring that none of those nations will attack them.

The wording "For even that Other Side delights in their joy. … he cannot prevail against them" does not appear in any of the printed editions nor in nearly any manuscript; I have found it only in P19. Yet without this wording, the syntax of the passage is tortuous. Apparently, some early scribe or editor deleted these lines because of the radical notion that the Other Side actually delights along with Israel.

On the seventy bulls and nations, see *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:23; BT *Sukkah* 55b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 28:9; *Tanḥuma, Pinḥas* 14; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pinḥas* 16; *Zohar* 1:64a–b, 208b; 2:58b–59a, 135a, 186b–187a, 233b; 3:24a–b, 54b–55a (*Tos*), 96b–97a, 104b, 258b–259a; Moses de

León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 177–78; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1251–53.

On the seventy heavenly princes, see Daniel 10:13, 20–21; Septuagint, Deuteronomy 32:8–9; Jubilees 15:31–32; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 11:8, Deuteronomy 32:8–9; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 24; *Tanḥuma, Re'eh* 8; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Genesis 9:19; *Zohar* 1:46b, 61a, 84b, 108b, 149b, 177a; 2:33a, 95b–96a, 126b, 151b, 186b–187a, 209a–b, 232b; 3:7b–8a, 260b–261a, 298b; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:204–5, n. 91.

105. **sacrificing שעיר (*sa'ir*), a goat...** This animal was brought as a purification offering on numerous occasions, including the new moon, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and the three pilgrimage festivals. According to the *Zohar*, the goat offered on the new moon was intended to preoccupy Satan so that he would not threaten Israel or *Shekhinah* (both symbolized by the moon). On the scapegoat of Yom Kippur, see above, note 97.

The word שעיר (*sa'ir*), means "goat, demon, satyr" and also "hairy." In Genesis 27:11, Esau is described as איש שעיר (*ish sa'ir*), *a hairy man*, and Esau and his descendants inhabited the land of שעיר (*se'ir*), *Seir* (see Genesis 32:4; 36:8-9). Moreover, Esau represents the demonic realm. Based on several of these associations, the old man agrees that *sa'ir*, "a goat," befits the demonic Other Side; but he wonders why the offering consists specifically of *sa'ir*, which he understands as referring to a young goat, and not עז (*ez*), which he understands as referring to an adult goat.

On the terms *sa'ir* and *ez* in biblical Hebrew, see Milgrom, *Leviticus,* 1:213, 248. On *sa'ir*, see also *Bereshit Rabbah* 65:15; *Zohar* 1:65a, 138b, 145b, 153a; 3:64a; below, p. 213, n. 316. On *ez*, see also *Zohar* 2:213a; 3:25a, 41b.

On the new-moon offering, see Numbers 28:15; *Bereshit Rabbah* 6:3; BT *Ḥullin* 60b; *Zohar* 1:64a, 65a, 122b, 138b; 2:33a, 238a, 269a; 3:248a–b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:893.

106. **this particular one is essential…** Sorcerers employ a young male animal who has not yet mated; similarly, a *sa'ir* is offered to the demonic Other Side and "matches his aspects entirely." This phrase may allude to the fact that the Other Side is considered impotent. Since Satan is king of the entire demonic realm, he deserves an effective offering. The last sentence refers to Israel's sins being loaded on the scapegoat; see Leviticus 16:21–22.

The theme of demonic impotence derives in part from BT *Bava Batra* 74b, where Rav discusses the primeval sea monster, Leviathan: "Everything that the blessed Holy One created in His world, He created male and female. Even Leviathan the elusive snake and Leviathan the writhing snake He created male and female, and if they mated with another, they would destroy the entire world. What did the blessed Holy One do? He castrated the male and killed the female, salting her for the righteous in the world to come."

See Isaac ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Ma'amar al ha-Atsilut ha-Semalit*, 262–63; *Zohar* 1:34b, 46b; 2:34b (Vol. 4, pp. 150–51, n. 45), 103a, 108b–109a, 112a; 3:170b. The theme of impotence may also allude to Christian celibacy and the monastic ideal, to which the *Zohar* is absolutely opposed. See Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 149, and 234, n. 47. On the Other Side as "king," see above, note 30.

107. **All these other sides below…** The lower rungs of the demonic realm are more impure than Satan, their king, and therefore their portion is *ez*, the adult goat, whose long hanging hair symbolizes extreme harshness and impurity. The impurity of King Satan (identified with the "wicked kingdom") is more refined, as it were, so his portion is *sa'ir*, the young goat, whose hair does not hang down. On the qualities of hair, cf. the physiognomic description in *Zohar* 2:70b–71a.

108. **כפור (*Kippur*), Purging…** Israel's impurity is purged and cleansed on Yom Kippur. First, however, *Shekhinah* Herself (symbolized by the Sanctuary) is purged, as implied

by the wording *on this day*, which refers to the sefirotic day of *Shekhinah*.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *For on this day He will effect purging* [or: *atonement*] *for you, to purify you of all your sins; before YHVH you will become pure*.

109. **Further, *He will effect purging on this day*...** First, *this day* of *Shekhinah* will be purged and cleansed; and all this is *for you*, for Israel's sake, so that they can receive the blessing that will resume flowing from Her.

110. **Who *will effect purging*?...** *Binah* ("the upper world") will cleanse all, and the extremely impure lower rungs of the demonic realm will be eliminated.

See above, note 107. On the "depths of the sea," see Micah 7:19; Psalms 68:23; *Zohar* 2:186a; 3:63b, 101a–102a, 134a (*IR*), 163b, 197a.

111. ***the Shrine*...** That is, *Shekhinah*, whose cleansing ensures the cleansing of all those below.

112. **What is *whatever their sins*?...** Why does the verse employ this particular wording, rather than the simpler, more consistent style: ...*and of their transgressions and all their sins*? The old man explains that the phrase *whatever their sins* emphasizes that no matter what the people of Israel have done or will do, from now on they are cleansed and purified, since the demonic Accuser has been assuaged and is powerless over them.

On Yom Kippur, it is forbidden to wear leather shoes (see the following note). By walking barefoot, one resembles the angels, whose feet are naked, as implied by Isaiah's vision (Isaiah 6:1–2): *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw my Lord, seated on a high and lofty throne, the hem of His robe filling the Temple. Seraphim were standing above Him* [or: *in attendance on Him*, or: *above it*, namely above the throne]. *Each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet* [or: *legs*], *and*

with two he flew. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 167.

"Cold-footed" is a conjectural translation of מקרסי רגלין (*meqaresei raglin*). *Meqaresei* is apparently based on the root קרס (*qrs*), "to contract, shrink, shrink due to the cold," a cognate of קרש (*qrsh*), "to congeal." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 31:40; Targum Job 6:12; 10:10; *Arukh ha-Shalem*, s.v. *qrs* (3), *qrsh*. Later printed editions replace this difficult locution with the easier, bland phrase יחפי רגלין (*yeḥefei raglin*), "barefoot."

113. **Five afflictions...** Or deprivations. See M *Yoma* 8:1: "On Yom Kippur, eating, drinking, washing, anointing, putting on sandals, and sexual relations are forbidden." According to BT *Yoma* 76a, these six afflictions are actually five, since "drinking is included in the category of eating." In the Talmud (ibid.), Rav Ḥisda relates this list of five to the five times that the Torah commands one to afflict himself on Yom Kippur. Here, the old man relates the five afflictions to the first five *sefirot* issuing from *Binah* (who is symbolized by Yom Kippur): *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret, Netsaḥ*, and *Hod*. These five correspond to the fifty gates of *Binah*.

If drinking is reckoned separately, then there are six afflictions. Apparently, drinking derives from *Gevurah* (symbolized by Isaac) because this *sefirah* is symbolized also by wine. The sixth affliction corresponds to the sixth *sefirah* issuing from *Binah*, namely *Yesod*, the divine phallus.

On the five afflictions, see *Zohar* 3:101a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 25–26 (30). On the sefirotic significance of the deprivation of sexual relations, see *Zohar* 2:116a (*RM*); 3:100b. On the fifty gates of *Binah*, see above, note 70.

114. **ובעשור (*u-ve-asor*), *And on the tenth...*** The old man asks why the Torah employs the unusual form *asor*, which can mean "a group of ten, decuple" or "the tenth," rather than the simple form עשירי (*asiri*), which means *the tenth* exclusively? He explains that on Yom Kippur the whole

“group of ten” *sefirot* is included in *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon). Since each of these ten reflects ten aspects, they total a hundred.

The element י״ה (*YH*) can be read as an abbreviation of יום הכפורים (*Yom ha-Kippurim*), “Yom Kippur,” or as the divine name יה (*Yah*). Finally, the old man reads *asor* as an infinitive absolute, meaning “(to) decuple, multiply by ten,” analogous to the infinitive forms שמור (*shamor*), *Keep, the Sabbath Day*; and זכור (*zakhor*), *Remember, the Sabbath Day*. Thus, the Torah indicates that *Shekhinah* is multiplied tenfold on Yom Kippur.

The full verse in Numbers reads: *And on the tenth of this seventh month you shall have a sacred assembly, and you shall afflict yourselves; no work shall you do*. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *Yet on the tenth of this seventh month is the Day of Purging* [or: *Atonement*], *a sacred assembly it shall be for you, and you shall afflict yourselves and bring a fire offering to YHVH*.

115. **But why amounting to a hundred?…** Rabbi Shim’on accepts that *asor* can mean “to multiply by ten,” but he wonders why the product of this multiplication would be a hundred, and not seventy, namely ten times “the seventh” of the lower *sefirot, Shekhinah*.

116. **there are two mysteries here…** *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon) is called “the seventh month,” being the seventh of the lower *sefirot*. She is also called *asor, ten*, because She is illumined ten times by each of the ten *sefirot*, totaling a hundred. Thus She includes both seventy and a hundred. The number seventy pertains both to *Shekhinah* and to the soul, which Israel is commanded “to afflict” on Yom Kippur and which comes under the authority of *Shekhinah* (symbolized by this holiest of days). The verse in Psalms indicates that the soul resides on earth for *seventy years*.

Leviticus 23:27 reads: *You shall afflict your souls* [or: *yourselves*]. For the full verse, see above, note 114.

Leviticus 23:29 reads in full: *For every soul* [or: *person*] *that is not afflicted on this very day shall be cut off from her kin*. The full verse in Psalms reads: *The days of our lives* [literally, *of our years*] *are seventy years, or with strength, eighty years; their pride is toil and sorrow, for swiftly cut down, we fly off*.

117. **As for the souls of children…** If the number seventy is inherent to *Shekhinah*'s authority over souls, then children (like anyone less than seventy years old) are presumably not under Her sway. However, the old man explains that *Shekhinah* spans all seventy years, including anyone under that age. He quotes a rabbinic teaching: "It is all one and the same whether a person does [or: offers] much or little, as long as he directs his mind [or: heart] toward heaven." The word "one" alludes to the single totality of seventy years, including both those who have done "much" (that is, lived a long life) as well those who have done "little" (that is, lived a short life so far).

For the rabbinic quotation, see M *Menaḥot* 13:11 (which reads "directs his mind") and BT *Berakhot* 5b, 17a; *Menaḥot* 110a (which all read "directs his heart").

118. **on Yom Kippur She traverses all of them…** *Shekhinah* spans, or includes, all seventy aspects of the seven lower *sefirot*, and She is filled by them all.

If a person sincerely repents on Yom Kippur, then his sins are cast "into the depths of the sea." See Micah 7:19; *Zohar* 3:63b, 101a–b, 197a. If he fails to purge himself, then his prayer sinks into the depths. On the demonic nature of these depths, see above at note 110.

The term טינא (*tina*), "clay, mud," can refer to impurity or impure thoughts. See BT *Ḥagigah* 15b, *Sanhedrin* 75a. The phrase "mire and mud" appears in Isaiah 57:20: *The wicked are like the troubled sea that cannot be still, whose waters chum up mire and mud*.

According to rabbinic tradition, prayers are woven into crowns, which are placed on God's head. See *Shemot*

Rabbah 21:4: “Rabbi Pinḥas said in the name of Rabbi Me’ir, and Rabbi Yirmeyah said in the name of Rabbi Abba, ‘When Israel prays, you do not find them all praying as one, but rather each assembly prays on its own, one after the other. When they have all finished, the angel appointed over prayers gathers all the prayers offered in all the synagogues and fashions them into crowns, which he places on the head of the blessed Holy One.’”

See *Ma’yan Ḥokhmah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:59); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Midrash Tehillim* 88:2; *Tosafot, Ḥagigah* 13b, s.v. *ve-qosher*; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 495; *Zohar* 1:37b, 132a, 162a, 167b, 168b–169a; 2:58a, 128b, 146b, 201b, 202b, 209a, 245b–246a (*Heikh*); Recanati on Genesis 19:27, 26a; Margaliot, *Mal’akhei Elyon*, 148–54; Green, *Keter*, 20–41.

119. **one should not openly recount his sins before another…** Aloud, but rather only quietly or silently before God. Otherwise, accusing powers can snatch that admission and present it before the heavenly court. Loud confession is impudent and desecrates God’s name, as if flaunting sinful behavior.

In the verse from Micah the simple sense of *her who lies in your bosom* is “your wife,” but here the old man is likely alluding to the soul, based on BT *Ḥagigah* 16a: “Perhaps you will say, ‘Who testifies against me?’… The Sages say, ‘A person’s soul testifies against him, as is said: *From her who lies in your bosom guard the doors of your mouth*. What is it that lies in a person’s bosom? You must admit it is the soul.’” See Rashi on the verse in Micah; *Zohar* 1:92a; 3:121b.

On openly recounting one’s sins, see BT *Berakhot* 34b, in the name of Rav Kahana: “I consider one who openly recounts his sins impudent.” Cf. *Zohar* 2:41a (*Piq*); 3:231a. The verse in Ecclesiastes reads: *Do not let your mouth* בשרך לחטיא את (*la-ḥati et besarekha*), *make your flesh sin*—apparently understood here as *incriminate your flesh*.

120. ***This month is for you…*** God has given to Israel the month of Nisan, the first month of the year (according to the Torah). This month, symbolizing *Shekhinah*, is openly revealed; whereas the seventh month (Tishrei) is concealed, since it symbolizes *Binah*, who is supernal and hidden. The concealed nature of Tishrei is indicated by the verse in Psalms: *Blast the shofar on the new moon*, בכסה (*ba-keseh*), *in the covering, for our festival day*. See above, note 86.

The biblical name for Nisan is אביב (*aviv*), "ears of corn," which ripen in the spring. (Later, the name *aviv* was applied to the spring in general.) The old man indicates that the word *aviv* follows the sequence of letters of the Hebrew alphabet: its first two letters are ב א (*alef, vet*); the next two letters, ב י (*yod, vet*), are numerically equivalent to ג (*gimel*), according to the method known as *mispar qatan*. In this method each letter is reduced to a value of one digit; for example, *alef* (which normally equals 1) and *yod* (which normally equals 10) are both equivalent to 1; *bet* (which normally equals 2) and *kaf* (which normally equals 20) are both equivalent to 2. Thus, the sequence *yod, vet* is equivalent to 1, 2, totaling 3, which is the value of *gimel*. Consequently, the word אביב (*aviv*) corresponds to the alphabetical sequence ג ב א (*alef, vet, gimel*).

On the other hand, the name of the seventh biblical month, תשרי (*tishrei*), follows the reverse sequence of alphabetical letters (at least in its first three letters): ת ש ר (*tav, shin, resh*). This reverse sequence, descending in value, alludes to the flow of emanation from *Binah* above to below, whereas the sequence ג ב א (*alef, vet, gimel*), ascending in value, represents the ascent from earth (or from *Shekhinah*) to above.

121. **This one is Mine…** At the beginning of the month of Tishrei (on Rosh Ha-shanah), *Binah* is concealed. By the tenth of month (Yom Kippur), She reveals Herself, declaring "I am He." By the fifteenth of the month (the beginning of *Sukkot*), She reveals Herself more fully. For various

interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

122. **Why all this?...** Why this whole sequence of fives? Because Tishrei derives from *Binah*, who is symbolized by the first letter ה (*he*) in יהוה (*YHVH*), a letter that is numerically equivalent to five. On *ba-keseh*, see above, notes 86, 120.

123. **Once the fifteenth day arrives...** Once the Festival of *Sukkot* begins on the full moon, then *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon) is renewed and illumined by the Divine Mother, *Binah*, and She conveys light below. The renewal of *Shekhinah* is indicated by the fact that the fifteenth of Tishrei is called *the first day*. Until now the sefirotic days were concealed above; from this day they descend to *Shekhinah*.

The full verse in Leviticus reads: *You shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of a majestic tree, fronds of palms, and branches of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before YHVH your God seven days*.

124. **If these first days derive from the supernal day...** If the first days of Tishrei derive from *Binah*, then who judges the world on Rosh Hashanah? After all, Judgment is administered by *Shekhinah* (known as "lower Judgment"), who rules *all the earth*—not by *Binah*, whose qualities of freedom, radiance, and joy distinguish Her from the harshness of Judgment. Nor can Judgment be administered according to the strict Judgment of *Din* (or *Gevurah*), symbolized by Isaac, since the world cannot bear this type of Judgment. Only *Shekhinah*, "the fire below," can bear the fierce fire of *Din* and convey it safely to the world. Being the lower divine world (and seventh of the lower seven *sefirot*), She is fittingly the *judge* of earth, "lowest of all worlds."

At the age of thirteen, a Jewish male is bound by the commandments and liable to punishment by a court; at the age of twenty, he becomes liable to punishment from

heaven. The final clause ("because it is the seventh rung, it only issues a decree…") is clarified below.

On the legal significance of the age of twenty, see Numbers 14:29; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 24:16; BT *Shabbat* 89b, *Bava Batra* 155a; *Tanḥuma, Qoraḥ* 3; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 18:4; *Zohar* 1:118b–119a; 2:97b–98a, 248b (*Heikh*); 3:293b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 20a (*MhN*); *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

On *Shekhinah* as "fire that endures fire," see *Zohar* 2:208a. Cf. BT *Yoma* 21b, where the fire of *Shekhinah* is described as "fire consuming fire." See Vol. 4, pp. 509–10, n. 522.

125. **If it is the seventh…** If *Shekhinah* is the seventh of the lower seven *sefirot*, why does She judge a person only from the age of twenty?

126. **Happy is one who speaks to ears that listen** For variants of this saying, see Ben Sira 25:13; Abraham Ibn Ḥasdai, *Ben ha-Melekh ve-ha-Nazir*, p. 150; *Sefer ha-Ḥinnukh, mitsvah* 419. Cf. Proverbs 25:12.

127. **A court below on earth…** At age thirteen, a Jewish male becomes liable to punishment by a court. Why at this age, and not at age twenty? (Or, why does the heavenly court of *Shekhinah* begin to render judgment at the later age of twenty?) Because the intervening seven years correspond and pertain only to *Shekhinah*, who is the seventh, resting upon thirteen years below on earth.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the legal significance of the age of thirteen, see M *Niddah* 5:6; BT *Yevamot* 34a. On the significance of the age of twenty, see above, note 124.

128. **Judgment of the world on Rosh Hashanah…** *Shekhinah* renders judgment on this day, so that She Herself can be purified of the taint of human sin. Her purification is effected by human repentance, enabling Her to ascend to *Binah*, "the upper world."

129. **When the people of Israel abide in fifteen days...** When they begin celebrating the Festival of *Sukkot*, *Shekhinah* spreads Her wings over them.

Designating four species of vegetation to be held on *Sukkot*, the full verse in Leviticus reads: *You shall take for yourselves on the first day fruit of a majestic tree, fronds of palms, and branches of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before YHVH your God seven days*. These four species became identified as the *etrog* (citron), *lulav* (palm branch), *hadas* (sprigs of myrtle), and *aravah* (willow twigs). Here, the first word in the list, *fruit* (*of*), symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is a *fruit tree* laden with soul-fruit.

For the context in Genesis, see the following note. On *Shekhinah* as *fruit tree*, see *Zohar* 1:18b, 33a, 62b, 238a. On souls as fruit, see *Bahir* 14 (22); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 489, 504; *Zohar* 1:15b, 19a, 33a, 59b–60a, 82b, 85b, 90b, 115a–b, 226b, 238a, 249a; 2:166b–167a, 223b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 51; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 56 (69). Cf. Ibn Ezra on Psalms 1:3.

130. ***A majestic tree...*** The majestic tree of *Yesod* (also known as Righteous One), which follows the *sefirah* of *Hod*, as implied by the wording of the verse in Psalms: הוֹד (*Hod*), *Splendor, and majesty*. But how, asks the old man, can *Yesod* (the divine phallus) be called *majestic*, when this organ is normally concealed? Because the penis is the majesty of the body. A castrated male is not majestic, lacking a masculine voice and a beard.

Finally, the old man interprets *a tree yielding fruit* as referring to *Yesod*, who impregnates *Shekhinah* with souls; She is *a fruit tree*, bearing this soul-fruit into the world.

See the previous note, and also *Zohar* 1:1a; 3:24a. The context in Genesis (1:11–12) reads: *God said, "Let the earth sprout grass, plants generating seed, fruit trees* [literally, *a fruit tree*] *yielding fruit of each kind, that has its seed within it upon the earth." And so it was. The earth brought forth grass, plants generating seed of each kind, and trees*

[literally, *a tree*] *yielding fruit that has its seed within it of each kind, and God saw that it was good*.

Yesod is known as Righteous One, based on Proverbs 10:25: וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*). Although the simple sense of the verse is *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*, it is understood midrashically as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Bahir* 71 (102); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34.

On a eunuch lacking a masculine voice, see BT *Yevamot* 80b. On a eunuch lacking a beard, which is also "the glory [or: majesty] of the face," see BT *Shabbat* 152a. On the glory (or majesty) of the beard, see also *Zohar* 2:122b, 176b–177a (*SdTs*); 3:130b–134b, 139a–140b (both *IR*), 289a–b, 295a–b (both *IZ*). On the majesty of the body, cf. *Bahir* 67 (97).

131. ***Fronds of palms…*** Namely, the *lu-lav*. Palm trees are dioecious: male and female flowers grow on separate trees. Male flowers produce pollen, while female flowers develop into fruit. As early as 2300 B.C.E., Mesopotamian farmers had learned to hang a male flower in a female tree to enhance pollination. Here, apparently, the old man indicates that just as the male and female palm trees are interdependent, so are *Shekhinah* and Her partner, *Tif'eret*. The deficient spelling of the word כפת (*kappot*), *fronds* (*of*), without a ו (*vav*), alludes to the divine couple being one, not two, just as two palm trees perform as one couple and the *lulav* is a single branch.

On the nature of the palm tree, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 40(41):1; *Midrash Tehillim* 92:11; BT *Pesaḥim* 56a; *Bahir* 117 (172), 139 (198), and Scholem's note ad loc.; Rashi on *Pesaḥim* 56a, s.v. *Rav Aḥa*; *Tosafot* on *Menaḥot* 71a, s.v. *markivin*; *Zohar* 1:82a, 220b (standard edition); 2:37b, 126a; 3:16a, 135b (*IR*), 143b (*IR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 128. On the deficient spelling of כפת (*kappot*), see BT *Sukkah* 32a; *Minḥat Shai* on Leviticus 23:40. Cf. *Zohar* 1:220b (standard edition).

132. ***And branches of leafy trees*—three…** Traditionally, three sprigs of myrtle are taken along with the other three species. See M *Sukkah* 3:4. Each sprig should have (at least) three leaves; on their exact configuration see BT *Sukkah* 32b and *Nitsotsei Zohar*. Here, the old man indicates that the three leaves symbolize the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, with the third of these incorporating and harmonizing the first two.

133. ***And willows of the brook…*** Traditionally, two willow twigs are taken along with the other three species. See M *Sukkah* 3:4. According to a rabbinic tradition, the willow, which lacks taste and scent, corresponds to those among Israel who lack both Torah and good deeds. According to *Bahir* 119 (177), the two willow twigs correspond to the two human thighs. In the *Zohar* the two willow twigs symbolize *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, the divine thighs.

According to *Or Yaqar*, the end of this sentence refers to the fact that although human thighs contribute substantially to sexual union, they derive no pleasure from the act.

On the willow lacking scent and taste, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:12; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 27:9. On their correspondence to *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, see *Zohar* 2:98a; 3:193b–194a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 185.

134. **the *lulav* conveys them all, like the spinal cord…** The *lulav* symbolizes *Yesod*, the cosmic pillar, corresponding to the spinal column. Technically, the *lulav* must protrude above the myrtle sprigs adjoining it by a handbreadth. Here, this protrusion symbolizes the extension of the cosmic pillar so that it can draw down the emanation from above and convey it to *Shekhinah* below.

On the *lulav* symbolizing the spine, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:14; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 19; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 28. On the protrusion of the *lulav*, see *Tosefta Sukkah* 2:8; BT *Sukkah* 32b.

135. **with these species should a person appear…** By celebrating with the four species on *Sukkot*, one imitates the *sefirot* (the realm of faith) and actualizes their union. The individual leaves of the palm frond symbolize other heavenly powers connected with various divine appellations.

On the effect produced above by actions below, see above, note 88. The theme of "as above, so below" is a cardinal principle of Kabbalah. See *Zohar* 1:38a, 57b–58a, 129a, 145b, 156b, 158b, 205b; 2:15b (*MhN*), 20a (*MhN*), 48b, 82b, 144a–b, 195b, 231b, 251a (*Heikh*); 3:40b, 45b, 65b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:273. On the similar Hermetic formulation, see *Secretum secretorum*, ed. Robert Steele, *Opera hactenus*, fasc. 5, 262.

136. ***In booths you shall dwell…*** The biblical command to dwell in *sukkot* relates to the sefirotic realm ("mystery of faith"), and this verse was actually spoken by the upper world, as explained below.

137. **When supernal Wisdom began to issue…** When *Ḥokhmah* began to issue from the concealed realm, an impulse radiated from *Ein Sof*. This impulse is known as משחתא (*mishḥeta*), "measure, surveying," or קו המדה (*qav ha-middah*), "the Line of Measure." This delineates the stages of emanation, gauging the divine flow. The impulse stimulated *Ḥokhmah* to expand into the Dwelling of *Binah*, which in turn generated the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*.

138. **Who is סכת (*sukkot*), lacking ו (*vav*)?…** The old man reads the verse in Leviticus as addressed by the "sparkling measure" to the supernal days: *In sukkot you shall dwell, O seven days*. The measure is telling these *seven days* (namely the *sefirot* from *Binah* through *Yesod*) to *dwell* in *Shekhinah*, who is known as סכת (*sukkot*), *booths*—spelled here without the letter ו (*vav*), thereby implying the singular form סכת (*sukkat*), "booth (of)," referring to *Shekhinah*, who lacks illumination until She is filled with the light of the higher *sefirot*.

Shekhinah is also called *Sukkat David*, *Booth of David* (Amos 9:11), since, being *Malkhut* (Kingdom), She is symbolized by King David. *Shekhinah* shelters Israel with peace, and on the Festival of *Sukkot* Israel should sit in the shade of the sukkah, protected by *Shekhinah* and—through Her—by the higher *sefirot*.

On the spelling of סכת (*sukkot*), see BT *Sukkah* 6b, 9b; *Sanhedrin* 4a; *Zevaḥim* 37b–38a; *Minḥat Shai* on Leviticus 23:42. On the verse in Leviticus being addressed to the *seven days*, see *Zohar* 3:103b. On the sukkah as shade, see above, note 81.

139. **all of them are בסכת (*ba-sukkot*)...** In this passage in Leviticus the word *ba-sukkot* is spelled twice without a ו (*vav*) and once with a *vav*: בסכת and בסכות, respectively. The old man takes this to mean that whoever sits in the shade of the sukkah—which symbolizes *Shekhinah* (who is called סכת [*sukkot*], spelled without a *vav*)—sits among the supernal days, who are symbolized by the full spelling: סכות (*sukkot*). For the different spellings of *sukkot*, see Leviticus 23:42–43 and the preceding note.

140. **all of them are read as סכות (*sukkot*), complete...** No matter how the noun is spelled, it is always read completely: *sukkot*. The deficient spelling—implying the singular form סכת (*sukkat*), "booth (of)"—alludes to *Shekhinah*, the lower world (as explained above, note 138). On the seven days of *Sukkot* She feeds the seventy heavenly princes (appointed over the seventy nations of the world) by means of seventy bulls offered by Israel. Thereby, She can rejoice in Her Husband, *Tif'eret*, with no interference from those princes. Then on *Shemini Atseret* (Eighth Day of Convocation), following the seven days of *Sukkot*, Israel rejoices undisturbed with God.

On the seventy bulls, nations, and heavenly princes, see above, note 104. The phrase "more numerous than on other days" alludes to other sacrificial portions that benefit the alien powers. See Vol. 5, pp. 211–12.

141. **While those appointed princes are rejoicing…** While they feast on the seventy bulls, the people of Israel adorn *Shekhinah*, who becomes a throne for the blessed Holy One, and elevate Her by celebrating with the four species.

On the *Hallel*, see above, note 63. On each of the first six days of *Sukkot* during the period of the second Temple, worshipers circled the altar once; on the seventh day (*Hosha'na Rabba*), they circled seven times. After the destruction of the Temple, these circuits were eventually replaced by similar ones in the synagogue, where worshipers carried the four species (except on the Sabbath).

142. **The other living creatures…** The seventy heavenly princes devour the sacrificial bulls. From *Yesod, Shekhinah* receives new souls to convey to the world. Following the seven days of *Sukkot*, on *Shemini Atseret* (Eighth Day of Convocation), *Shekhinah* rejoices with Israel. This eighth day corresponds to Her, for She includes and follows all seven *sefirot* from *Binah* through *Yesod*, which are symbolized by the seven days of *Sukkot*. Since She "gathers" them, She is identified with *Shemini Atseret*, "Eighth Day of Gathering."

The term חיון (*ḥeivan*), "living creatures, beasts" (used here to describe the heavenly princes of other nations), and the verbs "devour, crush, trample" all derive from Daniel's dream vision of four *ḥeivan* (beasts), which symbolize four kingdoms. See Daniel 7:7: *After that, as I looked on in the night vision, there was a fourth* חיוה (*ḥeivah*), *beast—fearsome, terrifying, and very powerful, with great teeth of iron. It devoured and crushed, trampling the remains with its feet. It was different than all the other beasts preceding it, and it had ten horns*.

In describing the eighth day (following the seven days of *Sukkot*), Leviticus 23:36 reads: עצרת היא (*atseret hi*), *It is a convocation*, which *Targum Onqelos* renders as: כנישין תהון (*kenishin tehon*), "You shall be gathered." See *Targum*

Yerushalmi, ad loc.; Numbers 29:35, and both Targums, ad loc.; *Zohar* 1:64a; 3:96b, 259b.

143. ***May the name of YHVH be*** **מברך (*mevorakh*), *blessed…*** The simple sense of *mevorakh* is clear, but one of the desert hermits discovered a deeper meaning in a dream. The first two letters of the word, מ ב (*mem, bet*), are numerically equivalent to forty-two, alluding to the Name of Forty-two Letters, by which God created the world. The letters *mem, bet* signify hardness and harshness, since God created the world by Judgment—as indicated by the appearance of the name *Elohim* (associated with Judgment) in the opening verse of the Torah: *In the beginning Elohim created the heaven and the earth*. Rosh Hashanah, which celebrates Creation, is thus the Day of Judgment and is characterized by the two letters *mem, bet*. The hardness of Rosh Hashanah eventually yields to the softness of *Shemini Atseret*, when God rejoices with Israel following the purging of Yom Kippur and the celebration of *Sukkot*. This softness is represented by the last two letters of מברך (*mevorakh*), *blessed*, which spell the word רך (*rakh*), "soft."

The Name of Forty-two Letters is mentioned in the name of Rav, though not recorded, in BT *Qiddushin* 71a. According to Jacob ben Meir Tam (Rabbenu Tam), this name consists of the first forty-two letters of the Torah, from the ב (*bet*) of בראשית (*Bereshit*), *In the beginning*, through the ב (*vet*) of בהו (*vohu*), *empty* (or *void*) (Genesis 1:2). Hai Gaon indicates that it consists of the letters חקבטנע, יגלפזק, שקוצית, אבגיתץ, קרעשטן, נגדיכש, בטרצתג, which are also the initial letters of the forty-two words constituting the prayer *Anna be-Khoaḥ* (Please, with the Strength [of Your Right Hand's Greatness]). See above, note 21.

On God creating the world by Judgment, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 14:1; *Shemot Rabbah* 30:13; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 43. On *Elohim* signifying Judgment (and *YHVH* signifying Compassion), see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; *Bereshit Rabbah*

12:15; 33:3; Naḥmanides on Deuteronomy 3:24. On Rosh Hashanah and Creation, see Vol. 1, p. 232, n. 1007.

The rabbinic source of the first half of the saying quoted by the old man is *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 2: "All beginnings are hard." See *Zohar* 1:174a.

The declaration *May the name of YHVH be blessed* also appears in Psalms 113:2, which concludes *from now and forevermore*.

144. **What is the difference...** Upper Judgment (*Din*, also known as *Gevurah*) is harsh throughout and thus unbearable. Lower Judgment (*Shekhinah*) begins harshly but gradually softens.

The transformation of female Judgment is described in opposite terms in *Sifra di-Tsni'uta* and *Idra Rabba*. See *Zohar* 178a (*SdTs*): "Judgments of the male are harsh at the beginning, at the end calm. Of the female, the reverse." See *Zohar* 3:142b (*IR*).

145. **When was upper Judgment aroused...** This unmitigated Judgment destroyed everything except Noah's ark, which symbolized *Shekhinah* and could thus bear that Judgment.

In the verse from Psalms the name *YHVH* symbolizes Compassion. See *Zohar* 1:56b; above, note 143. For a radically different interpretation of this verse, see below, p. 307, n. 127.

On Noah's ark symbolizing *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:59b, 60b–61a. On *Shekhinah* being able to bear harsh Judgment, see above, note 124.

146. **five of those hermits who had followed him...** Who had followed the old man from the desert. See above at note 80.

147. **Nehorai Sava...** Nehorai the Elder, who appears also in *Zohar* 3:10a, where he experiences a miraculous adventure. The other Nehorai appears in *Zohar* 1:126b (*MhN*) and in several narratives in *Midrash ha-Ne'lam* on Ruth.

148. **accompanied him for three miles** Out of respect. According to Rav Sheshet (BT *Sotah* 46b), one should accompany his teacher a distance of a parasang. A distinguished teacher, however, is to be escorted for three parasangs. (The Persian parasang equals about 3.5 modern miles. The term here in the *Zohar*, מילין [*milin*], "miles," refers to the Roman mile, slightly shorter than the modern mile.)

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 18:5; *Bereshit Rabbah* 32:10; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Avel* 14:3; *Zohar* 1:51a, 87a, 96b, 150b, 217a, 240a; 2:14a, 164a; 3:8b.

149. ***He knows what is in darkness…*** On the interdependence of light and darkness, see *Zohar* 1:32a; 2:115b (*RM*); 3:47b; above at note 84. On the verse in Daniel, see *Tanḥuma, Tetsavveh* 8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tetsavveh* 6; *Zohar* 2:100b–101a; *ZḤ* 27a (*MhN*).

150. **Why didn't they come with you at first?** "Why didn't your disciples accompany you?"

151. **From him I learned not to reveal** Nehorai Sava revealed his name only after he was asked. See *Zohar* 1:87a, 149a, 207a; 2:16b (*MhN*), 157a; 3:39b, 75b, 158a; *ZḤ* 11c (*MhN*); *Derekh Emet*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

1. ***When you count…*** The verse reads in full: *When you count the heads of the Israelites according to their numbers, every man shall give ransom for his life to* YHVH *when they are counted, that there shall be no plague among them when they are counted*.

In the ancient Near East it was commonly believed that counting humans was dangerous, apparently because determining an exact number of individuals would set them up as vulnerable targets for evil forces. The story of King David's ill-fated census in 2 Samuel 24, which triggers a plague, turns on this belief. The danger of a census could be averted by paying a "ransom" for each threatened life as a donation to the sanctuary. See Alter, *The Five Books of Moses*, on this verse.

The Zoharic fragment following this biblical quotation in the standard editions of the *Zohar* appears in its full version in 2:225a–226a (below, beginning on p. 291 at n. 86).

2. **no blessing from above settles…** See BT *Ta'anit* 8b: "Blessing is not found in anything weighed, measured, or counted, but only in that which is hidden from the eye."

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 64:6; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 10:6; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 25, 127b; *Tanḥuma, Re'eh* 14; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Re'eh* 12; *Zohar* 1:5a, 64b, 202a; 2:219a, 221b, 225a, 227b; 3:117b; and the preceding note.

3. **Why does a plague arise by counting?…** See above, note 1.

The passage from the middle of 187b to the top of 188a is from the later stratum of Zoharic literature, *Ra'aya Meheimna*, and is not translated here.

4. **night dusked…** "Dusked" renders רמש (*remash*), an apparently Zoharic verb based on רמשא (*ramsha*), "evening."

See *Zohar* 1:34b; 2:36b, 171a, 173a, 208a; 3:21a, 52b, 113b, 149a–b, 166b; *ZḤ* 7d (*MhN*), 25d (*MhN*), 28b (*MhN*).

5. **all those children of the East…** Who dwell in "the mountains of light," namely the mountains in the east that

catch the first rays of dawn. These inhabitants worship the early morning light before the globe of the sun appears.

It is unclear to whom Rabbi Ḥiyya is referring when he speaks of easterners who worship the early light of dawn. According to early Islamic sources, the Mandaeans of Mesopotamia (sometimes called Sabians) worshiped the sun. The medieval pagans of Mesopotamian Haran (also called Sabians) worshiped the sun alongside their main deity, the moon. According to the ninth-century Muslim scholar Ahmad Ibn al-Tayyib al-Sarakhsi, the Haranians' first prayer of the day included multiple prostrations "half an hour or less before the rising of the sun, finishing at sunrise." See Gündüz, *The Knowledge of Life*, 24, 26–27, 143, 164. Cf. Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:29.

"God" renders אֱלָהּ (*elah*), "God, god," which can also be construed as אַלַּהּ (*allah*), "Allah." On the phrase "God of the shining pearl," cf. the Sufi expression *al-durra al-bayda*, "the white pearl," referring to the divine intellect. See Ibn Arabi, *al-Futuḥat al-makkiya* (The Meccan Openings), 1:46; 2:130.

On "children of the East," see above, p. 9, n. 23. On sun worship, see also M *Sukkah* 5:4; BT *Berakhot* 7a; *Zohar* 1:95b; 2:35a. On this passage, see Kiener, "The Image of Islam in the *Zohar*," 60–61; and Liebes, *Pulḥan ha-Shaḥar: Yaḥas ha-Zohar la-Avodah Zarah*.

6. **they have thereby known wisdom…** The worship of this early-morning light is directed at the angel appointed over the sun.

The phrase "points and signs … of the sun" may refer to the signs of the zodiac, through which the sun travels during the course of a year. The "point" would be the precise place where the sun appears in a zodiacal constellation, e.g., the tenth degree of Libra. Then the meaning of "enabling them to find the location of gold and gems" could refer to how astrologers use the sun's zodiacal sign and the positions of planets relative to the sun in a given constellation in order to find treasures. Furthermore,

according to medieval astrology, the sun and the planets influence the growth of plants and of veins of minerals.

The medieval pagans of Haran associated gold with the sun. See the preceding note; Gündüz, *The Knowledge of Life*, 146. On the sun generating gold, see *Zohar* 1:249b–250a. Cf. below, p. 363, n. 300; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 95 (120). On heavenly influence on minerals, see Vol. 5, p. 501, n. 882; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:29. On heavenly "points," cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Qiddush Levanah* 12:2; Ben-Yehuda, *Dictionary*, 5:3787b, s.v. *nequddah*.

According to *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 6, "Three letters of the Name [apparently, of the name *YHVH*] are inscribed on the heart of the sun." See *ZḤ* 17d (*MhN*), 76c (*MhN, Rut*). On letters in the morning sky, cf. *Zohar* 2:130b; 3:165a. On the windows of heaven, see JT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 2:6, 58a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 6; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:22; *ZḤ* 76c (*MhN, Rut*).

7. **Surely falsehood has no pillars...** A paraphrase of the rabbinic saying "Falsehood has no feet." See *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:397); Rashi on Proverbs 12:19 (the verse quoted in the next sentence); *TZ* 22, 66a. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 104a: "Truth stands; falsehood does not stand."

8. **The other one opened...** Rabbi Ḥiyya explains that if the objects of false worship were earthly entities such as wood and stone, which are subject to decay, then they would cease to exist; but the heavenly bodies themselves are eternal and true. God does not wish to destroy these; rather, He will eventually destroy those who worship them.

See *Tosefta Avodah Zarah* 6:7: "Philosophers asked the [Jewish] elders in Rome, 'If [God] does not want idolatry, why does He not abolish it?' They replied, 'If they worshiped something that was not essential, He would abolish it; but they worship the sun, moon, and stars. Should He destroy His world because of the fools? Rather,

let the world follow its natural course, and as for the fools who acted corruptly, they will have to give an account.’” See M *Avodah Zarah* 4:7; *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 6; BT *Avodah Zarah* 54b.

9. ***The lip of truth* … Israel…** The people of Israel declare the truth of God’s oneness every day by reciting the *Shema*, thereby proving themselves to be *the lip of truth*, which *will be established forever*.

The opening verse of the *Shema* (in Deuteronomy) reads: *Hear, O Israel! YHVH our God, YHVH is one*. This central prayer ends with the concluding words of Numbers 15:41, *YHVH your God*, supplemented by “(is) truth.”

10. **ועד ארגיעה (*Ve-ad argi’a*), *only a moment*…** The word *argi’a* is an unusual verb, which is sometimes understood in this verse according to the nominal sense of רגע (*rega*), “a moment.” Why, then, doesn’t the verse employ the noun itself? Because, Rabbi Ḥiyya explains, the verb connotes “to find peace or rest.” When Israel (along with *Shekhinah*) finally finds rest from the harsh exile, then those who worship false gods will be destroyed.

On the verb *argi’a*, see the similar forms in Deuteronomy 28:65; Isaiah 34:14; cf. Jeremiah 47:6.

11. **a certain *hegmona*…** In rabbinic literature this word means a Roman “prefect, governor” (based on Greek *hegemon*), while in medieval Hebrew it designates a Catholic bishop. According to the Talmud, Rabbi El’azar was involved in the Roman administration of Palestine (see BT *Bava Metsi’a* 83b–84b). Here, the discussion between Rabbi El’azar and the *hegmona* reflects Jewish-Christian polemics in medieval Spain.

See *Zohar* 3:220b–221b; Bacher, “Judaeo-Christian Polemics in the Zohar”; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:69.

12. **We have reigned since ancient days…** Referring to the enduring Christian domination, as opposed to the disappearance of Jewish sovereignty.

13. **May that man's breath expire!...** A curse appearing often in rabbinic literature, equivalent to "May you drop dead!" See *Zohar* 1:238b; 2:28a–b; 3:105a, 149b, 152a. Rabbi El'azar's initial compliment ("I see that you are wise in Torah") turns out to be quite sarcastic.

14. **If the verse read...** The past tense (*You have established*) could refer to the establishment of Israel's opponents, whereas the future tense (*will be established*) refers to Israel's eventual triumph.

The wording "sprouts from the midst of the earth" derives from Psalms 85:12: *Truth will sprout from the earth*.

15. **let us join with *Shekhinah*...** Any sincere engagement with Torah attracts the Divine Presence.

See M *Avot* 3:2, in the name of Rabbi Ḥanina son of Teradyon: "If two are sitting with words of Torah between them, *Shekhinah* is between them." See ibid. 3:3, 6; BT *Berakhot* 6a. On the importance of engaging in Torah while walking or traveling, see Deuteronomy 6:7; M *Avot* 3:7; BT *Eruvin* 54a, *Ta'anit* 10b; *Zohar* 1:7a, 58b, 69b–70a, 76a, 87a, 115b, 157a, 164a, 230a–b; 2:13a, 95a, 138b, 155b, 232b. On the wording here, "let us join with *Shekhinah*," see below, p. 291 at n. 86.

16. ***Behold, shamed and humiliated...*** The biblical prophecies of Israel's future reward and their enemies' retribution enable them to endure the suffering of exile.

See *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:7; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 4; *Midrash Tehillim* 119:38; *Shemot Rabbah* 5:18; *Zohar* 1:136a (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 94–95. The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Behold, shamed and humiliated shall be all who rage against you; they who strive with you shall be as nothing and shall perish*.

17. **Where is your God?...** See *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:7: "The star-worshipers taunt Israel, saying to them: 'Your

God has hidden His face from you and removed His presence from you. He will not return to you.'"

The concluding clause means "when Judgment is executed against Israel." The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Hear the word of YHVH, you who tremble at His word: Your brothers who hate you, who ban* [or: *reject*] *you because of My name, have said, "Let YHVH be glorified, so that we may see your joy!" But they will be put to shame*. On this verse and its interpretation in this passage, see *ZḤ* 86a (*MhN, Rut*). The verse in Jeremiah reads: *For thus says YHVH: We have heard….*

18. **your brothers, the children of Esau** Jacob's twin brother. In rabbinic literature the name Esau (or his nation Edom) often represents Rome, and in medieval literature it often represents Christianity.

19. **no nation despises Israel…** Cf. *Zohar* 2:17a (*MhN*), where a similar attitude and behavior is attributed to Ishmael, representing Arabs.

20. ***For my name's sake…*** The descendants of Esau claim that they, and not Israel, are the true children of God, glorifying His name.

Here the verse in Isaiah is construed: … *Your brothers who hate you, who ban you, say, "For my name's sake, let YHVH be glorified…."* Cf. above, note 17. The full verse in Genesis reads: *It happened when Isaac was old, that his eyes were too dim to see, and he called Esau, his elder son, and said to him, "My son!" He answered, "Here I am."*

21. **But you are the smallest…** Esau's descendants taunt Israel, declaring sarcastically, "O *that we may see your joy*." See above at note 17.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *Rebekah took the precious garments of Esau, her elder son, which were with her in the house, and clothed Jacob*, בנה הקטן (*benah ha-qatan*), *her younger* [literally, *small*] *son*.

22. ***But they will be put to shame…*** The verse in Isaiah 66 is construed: *Your brothers who hate you, who*

ban you, say, "For my name's sake, let YHVH be glorified. [*O*] *that we may see your joy!" But they will be put to shame*. Here Rabbi Yose indicates that the concluding sentence is spoken by the Holy Spirit and not by the descendants of Esau, shifting their malevolent intention back to themselves. Eventually, the enemies of Israel will be shamed when they witness Israel's triumph and reward. On shifting a curse, cf. BT *Sotah* 11a, *Sanhedrin* 106a; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:9.

The verse in Isaiah 41 reads הֵן (*Hen*), *Behold shamed and humiliated shall be all who rage against you…* (see above, note 16). Here Rabbi Yose is apparently construing the first word as the (feminine) plural subject *hen*, *they*, indicating that Israel's enemies—and not Israel—*shall be shamed and humiliated*. V20, Cremona, and *Or Yaqar* record here the masculine plural subject הֵם (*hem*), *they*.

23. **But … exile persists…** And the Davidic Messiah has still not appeared. This tone of despair appears also in *Zohar* 1:136a (*MhN*), 219b; 2:9a, 189b; 3:112a.

"The mighty of the world" are mighty Torah scholars. See Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, § 108; *Zohar* 1:151a; *ZḤ* 93b (*MhN, Eikhah*). On the phrase "and still the son of David has not come," cf. JT *Ta'anit* 4:6, 68d; *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:4; *Eikhah Rabbah* (ed. Buber) 2:2.

24. **what enables Israel to endure…** See above, note 16.

25. **all depends on *teshuvah*…** Only by sincerely turning back to God can Israel ensure redemption. First, however, Israel must undergo the predicted punishments.

On *teshuvah* as a prerequisite for redemption, see JT *Ta'anit* 1:1, 63d; BT *Sanhedrin* 97b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 43; *Tanḥuma, Beḥuqqotai* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), 5.

The context in Deuteronomy reads: *It shall be, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse that I have set before you, and you take them to heart among all the nations to which YHVH your God has driven you away, and*

you return to YHVH your God and heed His voice, as all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your being, then YHVH your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion upon you, and He will return and gather you from all the peoples to which YHVH your God has scattered you. If your dispersed be at the ends of heaven, from there YHVH your God will gather you and from there He will take you.

26. **How you have blocked all the ways…** Rabbi Yose fears that if *teshuvah* has no effect until far in the future, Israel will not even attempt to turn back to God. Unable to endure such a long exile, they will consequently abandon the Torah.

27. ***Like a pregnant woman…*** If she gives birth early in the ninth month and experiences only relatively few pangs, it is still considered as if she endured the entire month with all its pangs.

On the question of whether part of the ninth month of pregnancy counts as the entire month, cf. Isaac ben Sheshet Perfet, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 446; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

28. **Similarly with Israel…** Thus *teshuvah* can lead to redemption even before all the Torah's dire predictions have been fulfilled.

29. ***When you are in distress…*** The full verse reads: *When you are in distress and all these things find* [or: *befall*] *you at the end of days* [or: *in future days, in time to come*], *you shall return to YHVH your God and heed His voice*.

The term *matronita* refers here to the queen. See above, p. 39, n. 102. For similar parables, see *Zohar* 3:74a–b, 114b–115a, 297b. Cf. *Zohar* 3:6a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 122–23.

30. **He went and associated with whores…** For another parable relating to prostitution, see *Zohar* 2:163a.

31. **spiral trumpets** בוקינס (*Buqinas*), based on Greek *bukane*, and Latin *bucina*, "spiral (or crooked) trumpet." See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:4; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:4; *Shir*

ha-Shirim Rabbah on 1:12; *Midrash Tehillim* 18:14; *Zohar* 3:202b.

32. **At that time they had not sinned…** So why had they been subjugated to slavery in Egypt? Because God was fulfilling the decree He made to Abraham, which was marked by a ritual in which several animals were cut in half. On that day, toward sunset, God declared to Abraham: *Know well that your seed will be strangers in a land not theirs, and they will be enslaved and afflicted four hundred years. But upon the nation that they serve I will bring judgment, and afterward they will go forth with great substance* (Genesis 15:13–14).

Immediately preceding "the covenant between the halves," God had assured Abraham that he would inherit the land of Canaan (Genesis 15:7). According to rabbinic tradition, Abraham demonstrated a lack of faith when He questioned this assurance by asking *How shall I know that I will inherit it?* His lack of faith was "the cause" of Israel's enslavement in Egypt. The second factor contributing to the enslavement was the need for Israel to be refined and molded into a nation.

On Abraham's lack of faith as causing Israel's enslavement, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 15:13; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 11:5; BT *Nedarim* 32a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 48; *Tanḥuma, Qedoshim* 13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Qedoshim* 13; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 47, p. 190; *Shemot Rabbah* 5:22; 30:16; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 14; *Seder Eliyyahu Zuta* 2; *Midrash Tehillim* 18:22.

33. ***Like a rose among thorns…*** God intended for Israel to correspond to *Shekhinah*, the supernal rose; consequently, He sowed Jacob's seventy descendants and their spouses among the *thorns* of Egypt. Their presence stimulated the vibrant growth of the Egyptian empire.

On the verse in Song of Songs as relating to Israel in Egypt, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 2:6 (on 2:2). On the relation between the rose's quality and its

thorns, see *Shir ha-Shirim Zuta* 2:2. On *Shekhinah* as a rose (or lily), see *Zohar* 1:1a, 137a; 2:20a (*MhN*); 3:37b–38a, 107a, 233b, 286b.

In Song of Songs שושנה (*shoshanah*) probably means "lily" or "lotus," but here it connotes "rose," as is clear from the word ורדין (*vardin*), "roses," in the middle of the paragraph. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 2:6 (on 2:2); *Zohar* 1:1a, 137a; 2:20a (*MhN*); 3:107a, 180b, 233a–b, 286b; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 489 (lily); Joseph ibn Akhnin, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 63–65 (rose); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 183–84. A Ladino translation of the verse (*The Ladino Five Scrolls*, ed. Lazar, 4–5) reads: "Commo la roza entre los espinos, ansi mi conpañera entre las dueñas."

On the number of Jacob's descendants who went down to Egypt, see Genesis 46:26–27; Exodus 1:5; Deuteronomy 10:22; Sarna, *Exodus*, on 1:5. On the Israelites' stimulating effect on Egypt, see *Zohar* 2:6a–b. On Israel's flourishing in Egypt, see Exodus 1:7.

34. **Once the blessed Holy One sought to pluck the rose…** Israel's redemption from slavery doomed the Egyptians, many of whom perished in the plagues and at the Red Sea. Then God brought His firstborn son to the Promised Land, pictured as the divine palace.

35. **When he sinned, as before…** When Israel sinned again, God expelled them from the Holy Land to Babylonia, where they assimilated and intermarried. This corresponds to the parable's description of the prince living with prostitutes (see above at note 30). Still, their Mother, *Shekhinah*, defended them before the blessed Holy One.

On intermarriage in Babylonia, see Ezra 9–10; Nehemiah 13:1–3, 23–27; Rashi on Leviticus 18:2; *Zohar* 1:260a (*Hash*); 2:7a, 239b–240a.

36. **Because they had acted so…** Since they had disgraced God and themselves, Israel's return from the

Babylonian exile was not miraculous, unlike the exodus from Egypt and the entry into the Holy Land.

See BT *Berakhot* 4a: "The Israelites were worthy to have a miracle performed for them in the days of Ezra, as it was performed for them in the days of Joshua son of Nun [when they entered and conquered the Land miraculously], but sin caused [such a miracle to be withheld]." See *Zohar* 2:7a, 239b–240a.

37. **He expelled this son … and his Mother…** This time *Shekhinah* was expelled along with Israel, ensuring its survival and reassuring the people with hope. Being the last of seven lower *sefirot* (the cosmic days), *Shekhinah* is called אחרית הימים (*aḥarit ha-yamim*), *the end* [or: *last*] *of days*, and in the current extended exile Israel suffers באחרית הימים (*be-aḥarit ha-yamim*), *with the end of days*—that is, along with *Shekhinah*.

On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 14, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: "Wherever Israel went in exile, *Shekhinah*, as it were, went into exile with them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* went into exile with them…. When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* went into exile with them…. And when in the future they return, *Shekhinah*, as it were, will return with them."

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 84; JT *Ta'anit* 1:1, 64a; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:54; BT *Megillah* 29a; *Zohar* 1:68b–69a, 120b, 134a, 149a, 159b, 182a, 211a, 237a; 2:2a–b, 41b (*Piq*), 82a, 216b; 3:6a–b, 74a–b, 114b–115a, 297b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 122–23; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 73–74 (92–93); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:382–85.

On the verse in Isaiah, see *Zohar* 1:237a; 3:8a, 74b–75a, 102b, 115a. On *Shekhinah* as *the end of days*, see *Zohar* 1:234b; 3:270a.

38. **if they engage in *teshuvah*…** By repenting and turning back to God, Israel fulfills the purpose of exile and her suffering is completed even before all the intended "generations" of exile have appeared. Thereby the "evil extremity"—namely the demonic dominion of exile—is

terminated, along with its control and “ownership” of Israel, and redemption arrives.

See above, note 28; Vital. The verse in Leviticus concerns the repurchase (or redemption) of urban real estate. It reads in full: *If it is not redeemed before a full year has elapsed, the house in the walled city shall pass over irreversibly to its buyer throughout his generations; it shall not be released in the jubilee*. On the connection between the preceding verse and Israel’s redemption, see Ḥayyim ben Moses ibn Attar, *Or ha-Ḥayyim*, Leviticus 25:29; *Matoq mi-Devash*. Cf. *Tanḥuma, Behar* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Behar* 4.

בוצינא קדישא (*Botsina Qaddisha*), the Holy Lamp, is the title of Rabbi Shim’on. See *Zohar* 1:3b–4a, 156a, 197b, 217a; 2:4a, 31a, 123b, 127b, 149a, 200b, 203b; 3:7b, 171a; *ZḤ* 85d (*MhN, Rut*). Cf. 2 Samuel 21:17; *Bereshit Rabbah* 85:4; BT *Ketubbot* 17a, where Rabbi Abbahu is called בוצינא דנהורא (*Botsina di-Nhora*), “Lamp of Light”; and *Berakhot* 28b, where Rabban Yoḥanan son of Zakkai is called נר ישראל (*Ner Yisra’el*), “Lamp of Israel.”

39. **Certainly so…** Rabbi Ḥiyya accepts Rabbi Yose’s view that *teshuvah* does hasten redemption. Thus, exile persists until Israel sincerely turns back to God. See above, notes 25–26, 28.

40. **whatever the blessed Holy One has foreseen…** Through *Shekhinah* (*the end of days*), God will enact all His promised redemptive acts.

In rabbinic literature the three patriarchs are pictured as mountains protecting Israel. In the *Zohar* the patriarchs symbolize respectively the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret*. The first patriarch is also described in midrashic literature as high priest, another symbol of *Ḥesed*.

During Grace after Meals “the cup of blessing” is traditionally held in the right hand. Here this cup symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who receives the flow of blessing from

Ḥesed, the divine right hand; thus She *will be established at the head of the mountains*.

On the patriarchs as mountains, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 353; JT *Sanhedrin* 10:1, 27d; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 36:6; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 11a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:6; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 28; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:4, 26; 28:2; *Zohar* 1:87a, 208b; 2:58b, 69b, 109b–110a.

The title "Abraham the Elder" is modeled on "Israel the Elder," on which see Vol. 5, p. 425, n. 669. On Abraham as high priest, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 46:5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 25:6.

On how to hold the cup of blessing during Grace after Meals, see BT *Berakhot* 51a: "One takes it with both his hands and places it in his right hand." See *Zohar* 1:1a, 156a (*ST*), 233b, 240a, 250a–b; 2:104a, 138b, 143b, 157b, 168b; 3:245a–b (*RM*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 105; idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 383. On Abraham and the cup of blessing, see BT *Pesaḥim* 119b.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *In the end of days, the Mount of YHVH's House will be established at the head of the mountains and elevated above the hills, and all the nations will stream to it*.

41. ***And elevated above the hills…*** According to BT *Berakhot* 51a, the cup of blessing must be raised "טפח (*tefaḥ*), a handbreadth [i.e., the breadth of four fingers joined], from the ground." Here, Rabbi Ḥiyya specifies that the cup should be raised above the table by a larger distance: זרת (*zeret*), "a span," the distance from the little finger to the thumb of a spread hand. *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the cup of blessing) is *elevated above the hills*, namely above Her angelic maidens. Thereby She receives the flow of emanation and can convey its goodness to Israel below.

As mentioned above (note 37), the phrase *end of days* designates *Shekhinah*. Here Rabbi Ḥiyya understands the phrase באחרית הימים (*be-aḥarit ha-yamim*), *at the end of days*, as

by the end of days, namely "by the power, by means of *Shekhinah*."

On *the hills* as angelic maidens, see *Zohar* 2:112a–b. The verse in Psalms reads: *Virgins behind her, her companions, are brought to you*.

42. ***And all the nations will stream to it*** The conclusion of the verse. See above at the end of note 40.

43. **Even women and children…** The wording *all the nations* implies that all those at the table must respond to the Grace after Meals by saying "Amen."

On the waiter being included among those who recite Grace after Meals, see BT *Berakhot* 45a–b. On responding with "Amen" even if one has not joined in the meal, see BT *Berakhot* 53b.

44. **although women and children are exempt…** On women being exempt from time-bound commandments, see BT *Berakhot* 20b. On the question of women reciting Grace after Meals, see Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 44–45; Vol. 5, p. 480, n. 823; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

On a child holding the cup of blessing, see *Zohar* 3:191a; *Zohorei Ya'bets*. On the phrase "as long as they know whom they bless," see BT *Berakhot* 48a (regarding a child who may be included in Grace after Meals).

45. **If this is really *the end of days*…** The verse in Isaiah reads: *In the end of days, the Mount of YHVH's House will be established at the head of the mountains*. If the phrase *the end of days* refers to *Shekhinah* (who is the Cup of Blessing), why does the verse also mention *the Mount of YHVH's House*, which also signifies *Shekhinah*? Why the redundancy?

46. ***The end of days* is the entire tree…** Rabbi Ḥiyya explains that *the end of days* refers to the totality of *Shekhinah*, who is known as the Tree of Good and Evil, whereas *the Mount of YHVH's House* signifies the pure goodness of *Shekhinah*, once evil has been eliminated.

47. **He asked him…** Rabbi Yose asked Rabbi Ḥiyya.

48. **Rav Hamnuna Sava…** Historically, Rav Hamnuna Sava was a Babylonian teacher who lived in the mid-third century. Generally in the *Zohar*, Rav Hamnuna Sava appears as a contemporary of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai (who lived in the second century). In the Talmud, Rav Hamnuna occasionally transmits teachings of Rabbi Shim'on (e.g., BT *Ḥullin* 21a, *Temurah* 15a), and several prayers are attributed to him (BT *Berakhot* 11b, 17a, 58a). In the *Zohar*, roles are reversed and Rabbi Shim'on cites Rav Hamnuna. Throughout the *Zohar*, Hamnuna is greatly revered, and several original ritual acts are attributed to him; the Book of Rav Hamnuna Sava is cited frequently as well.

On the image of keeping a precious teaching "bound in כנפא (*kanpa*), the fold [or: wing, hem, flap], of my garment," cf. Numbers 15:38, where the Israelites are commanded: *They shall make for themselves* ציצת (*tsitsit*), *a tassel, on* כנפי (*kanfei*), *the hem* [or: *wing*] *of, their garments for their generations and place on the tassel of the hem a thread of violet* [or: *bluish purple*].

49. **the Holy Lamp…** This honorific title is normally applied to Rabbi Shim'on, but here it refers to Rav Hamnuna Sava, who is one of the pillars of the world. See above, note 38. In *Zohar* 1:6a, Hamnuna Sava is also called the Holy Lamp.

On Rabbi Yose's method of retaining or remembering this precious teaching, cf. BT *Pesaḥim* 72a: "He [Rabbi Yitsḥak son of Yosef] learned it from him [Rabbi Abbahu] forty times, and it seemed to him as though it were lying in his pouch." See BT *Megillah* 7b, *Ketubbot* 50a.

50. **…concerning the matter…** The beginning of this passage, relating to the incident of the Golden Calf, is missing not only in the printed editions (including Mantua and Cremona) but also in V20 and *Or Yaqar*. What God "indicated to Moses" is clarified below at note 57. The

speaker is apparently Rabbi Ḥiyya, since it is Rabbi Yose who responds below (at note 56).

According to BT *Pesaḥim* 87a–b, when God told the prophet Hosea that Israel had sinned, he should have pleaded for them, but instead he advised God to exchange them for another nation. Then God instructed Hosea to marry a prostitute and have children with her, after which God told him to divorce her. When Hosea protested, God responded by declaring that Israel was much more precious to Him than the prophet's whoring wife. How could Hosea possibly suggest that God reject them? Realizing his sin, Hosea pleaded for Israel, succeeded in nullifying the divine decree of punishment, and blessed them by saying *The number of the Children of Israel will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or counted*.

The full verse in Hosea 1 reads: *When YHVH first spoke through Hosea, YHVH said to Hosea, "Go, take yourself a wife of whoredom and children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by straying from YHVH."* The full verse in Hosea 2 reads: *The number of the Children of Israel will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or counted; and instead of being told, "You are not My people," they will be called Children of the living God*.

51. **Of Elijah, what is written?...** When his life was threatened by Jezebel (the wife of King Ahab), Elijah fled into the desert and cried out to God because he had failed to make Israel repent. By sitting under רתם (*rotem*), *a broom bush*, Elijah apparently sought to evoke the merit of Deborah, who *used to sit under* תמר (*tomer*), *the Palm of, Deborah*—since these two words share the same letters.

The full verse in Kings reads: *He went a day's journey into the desert, and he came and sat under a broom bush, and prayed that he might die. He said, "Enough! Now, O YHVH, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers."*

The full verse in Judges 4 reads: *She used to sit under* תמר (*tomer*), *the Palm of, Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Children of Israel came up to her for judgment*. The full verse in Judges 5 reads: *Peasants* [or: *warriors, bravery, guidance, deliverance, leadership*] *ceased, ceased in Israel, until you arose, O Deborah, arose as a mother in Israel*.

52. **While he was sitting…** The zealous prophet Elijah is identified with Phinehas, who zealously defended God's covenant with Israel by killing an Israelite man and his forbidden Midianite sexual partner (Numbers 25). God rewarded Phinehas by granting him the divine *covenant of peace* through Moses. Now God tells Elijah that just as God yielded His covenant to Phinehas, so should Elijah relent from his covenantal zeal, yielding it to God.

The covenant symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is God's mouth. Since Elijah did not yield to God's mouth by ceasing to speak zealously, God arranges for him to journey to Mount Sinai, where his covenantal mouth will be reborn (as explained below).

See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29: "The blessed Holy One appeared to [Elijah] and said, '*What are you doing here, Elijah?*' He answered, '*I have been very zealous* [*for YHVH, God of Hosts, for the Children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant*]' (1 Kings 19:10). The blessed Holy One said, 'You are always zealous! You were zealous in Shittim on account of sexual immorality [Numbers 25]…, and here too you are zealous.'"

On Elijah and Phinehas, see the following note. On Moses giving the covenant to Phinehas, see *Zohar* 3:220a.

53. **the present … was taken from him…** The covenantal gift was taken away, so Elijah journeyed to Mount Sinai (Horeb) to seek it from Moses, who had inherited it there.

On Elijah being identified with Phinehas, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 6:18; Numbers 25:12; BT *Bava Metsi'a*

114b, and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *lav kohen mar*; *Tanḥuma, Pinḥas* 1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 21:3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29, 47; *Zohar* 1:209b; 3:214a, 215a (*RM*), 282a (*RM*); *ZḤ* 84c (*MhN, Rut*); Origen on John 6:7; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:316–17, n. 3. Cf. Pseudo-Philo 48:1–2.

The full verse in Kings reads: *He arose and ate and drank; and with the strength from that eating he walked forty days and forty nights as far as the mountain of God at Horeb*. In the biblical context, God says *What are you doing here, Elijah?* in the following verse.

54. **Rather, go to the babies of Israel…** Moses instructs Elijah to appear at the covenantal circumcision of each Jewish baby boy, where the prophet will regain the covenant. At a ritual circumcision, a special chair is placed at the right of the *sandaq* (godfather) and the *mohel* (circumciser) declares: "This is the chair of Elijah, may his memory be a blessing."

According to *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29, when the Israelites neglected the covenant of circumcision, "Elijah, may his memory be a blessing, was passionately zealous and adjured the heavens not to send down dew or rain upon the earth. Jezebel heard and sought to kill him. Elijah immediately prayed before the blessed Holy One. The blessed Holy One said to him, 'Are you better than your ancestors? Jacob fled [from Esau] and escaped…. Moses fled [from Pharaoh] and escaped…. David fled [from Saul] and escaped….' Elijah immediately fled from the land of Israel and escaped [to Horeb]…. The blessed Holy One appeared to him and said, *'What are you doing here, Elijah?'* He answered, *'I have been very zealous* [*for YHVH, God of Hosts, for the Children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant*].' The blessed Holy One said, 'You are always zealous! You were zealous in Shittim on account of sexual immorality [see above, note 52]…, and here too you are zealous. By your life! Israel will not enact the covenant of circumcision until you see it with your own eyes.' Because

of this the sages ordained that a seat of honor be arranged [at every circumcision] for the Angel of the Covenant [Elijah; see Malachi 3:1].”

See *Halakhot Gedolot* (according to *Shibbolei ha-Leqet* 376:6); *Sefer Ḥasidim*, ed. Wistinetzki, par. 585; *Zohar* 1:13a, 93a, 209b; *Shulḥan Arukh, Yoreh De’ah* 265:11; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:338, n. 103.

55. **A king of flesh and blood…** For this parable, see *Tanḥuma, Bemidbar* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bemidbar* 2; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 1:2. Cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:6.

On the various benefits brought by Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, see also *Tosefta Sotah* 11:8; *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:35; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 305; *Midrash Tanna’im*, Deuteronomy 34:8; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 9–10; BT *Ta’anit* 9a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:5; *Midrash Mishlei* 14:1. On Israel’s clothes not decaying, see Deuteronomy 8:4; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 11:21; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:11; *Midrash Tehillim* 23:3–4.

56. ***of all His good words…*** God’s positive words are always carried out, whereas His threatening words are sometimes left unfulfilled, on account of *Shekhinah*, the compassionate Mother, who prevents the blessed Holy One from striking Israel.

On God not carrying out every threat, see *Tanḥuma, Vayera* 13 (in the context of the Golden Calf), in the name of Rabbi Shemu’el son of Naḥman: “If He threatened in a moment of anger to bring evil, He relents.” Cf. *Bemidbar Rabbah* 23:8; Rashi on Jeremiah 28:7; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 10:4.

The verse in Kings reads: *Not a single word has failed of all His good words that He spoke through His servant Moses*.

57. **How do we know this?…** The story of the Golden Calf demonstrates how divine punishment can be suspended. When God raised the lash by accusing Israel of acting corruptly, Moses did not intervene (as *Shekhinah* would

have done); so God prodded him by saying *Now, leave Me be, that My wrath may blaze against them and I may consume them, and I will make you a great nation*. Moses realized that it was up to him to save Israel, so he seized God's right arm by invoking Abraham, who symbolizes that arm, the divine quality of *Ḥesed*.

See *Devarim Rabbah* 3:15: "*Now, leave Me be, that My wrath may blaze against them and I may consume them, and I will make you a great nation* (Exodus 32:10). Moses said, 'Am I grasping, as it were, the hand of the blessed Holy One? He must be seeking someone who will defend them.' Immediately, *Moses implored the presence of YHVH his God*… (Exodus 32:11)."

See BT *Berakhot* 32a: "Rabbi El'azar said, '… As soon as He said, *Release Me, that I may destroy them* (Deuteronomy 9:14), Moses said, "This matter depends on me!" Immediately he stood and emboldened himself in prayer and pleaded for mercy….' *Now, leave Me be, that My wrath may blaze against them and I may consume them, and I will make you a great nation*. Rabbi Abbahu said, 'If the verse were not written, it would be impossible to say! This teaches that Moses grasped the blessed Holy One like a man grasping his friend by the garment, and said before Him, "Master of the Universe! I will not leave You alone until You pardon and forgive them!"'"

See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 27; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 4, p. 17; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 22; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'etḥannan*, add. 1; *Shemot Rabbah* 42:9; 44:10; Rashi on Exodus 32:10; Deuteronomy 3:24.

"Prodded" renders אנקיד (*anqid*). The context in Exodus 32 (verses 7–8) reads: *YHVH said to Moses, "Go, get down! For your people that you brought up from the land of Egypt has acted corruptly. They have swerved quickly from the way that I commanded them. They have made themselves a molten calf and bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up*

from the land of Egypt!'" Exodus 32:13 reads in full: *Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel Your servants, to whom You swore by Yourself and said to them, "I will multiply your seed like the stars of heaven, and all this land of which I spoke, I will give to your seed, and they will possess it forever."*

58. **the Holy Lamp** Rabbi Shim'on. See above, note 38.

59. **he saw a sign in their faces…** Showing that they were perplexed, having failed to perceive "the clarity of the matter."

See *Zohar* 3:6a, 157a. On this passage (including the following two paragraphs), see Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 37–38.

60. **depart from the world before their time…** As happened to the students of Rabbi Akiva (Rabbi Shim'on's teacher), according to BT *Yevamot* 62b: "Rabbi Akiva had twelve thousand pairs of students between Gabat and Antipatris, and all of them died in a single season because they did not show respect to one another."

Apparently Rabbi Shim'on's generation was "unconcealed" (and engaged openly in secrets of Torah) because their love for one another rendered them immune to any threatening plague. On various aspects of the revealed quality of Rabbi Shim'on's generation, see *Zohar* 1:92b; 2:9a, 86b, 147a, 149a, 156a; 3:22b, 79a, 105b, 159a, 171a, 236b, 241b, 287a. On the unique status of his generation, see also *Bereshit Rabbah* 35:2; *Zohar* 1:225a; 3:58a, 206a.

61. **they produce a defect in her…** In Torah. The three patriarchs symbolize respectively the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, the last of which blends and harmonizes the first two.

62. **Once he saw a sign…** See above, note 59. "And said that" refers to Rabbi Shim'on's declaration above (at note 59): "Enter, holy children!…"

The clause “והכי (*ve-hakhei*), and so [or: in this manner, thus], we must know” apparently means that Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Ḥiyya want to know the answer to the question that was troubling them: “Where was Mother?” See above at note 58. Alternatively it could mean: “And so we should have known,” namely “we should have realized that Rabbi Shim’on possesses a prophetic spirit.” See Soncino; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

63. **one of those words whispered to him…** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:4, where Rabbi Shemu’el son of Naḥman conveys an esoteric teaching to Rabbi Shim’on son of Yehotsadak and then says, “As I heard it in a whisper, so I told it to you in a whisper.” Cf. JT *Beitsah* 1:9, 61a. Here, in contrast to the midrashic source, Rabbi Shim’on declares that he will convey the secret openly.

After departing this world, souls of the righteous visit the heavenly academy, where they continue to study Torah. See BT *Berakhot* 18b, *Bava Metsi’a* 86a. According to *Zohar* 1:7a, this academy is located in the supernal Garden of Eden. See *Zohar* 3:186a; *ZḤ* 36b; Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 136–37; Vol. 5, p. 488, n. 844; Scholem, *Devarim be-Go*, 1:278–83. On Rabbi Shim’on’s encounter with the head of the Academy of the Garden of Eden, see *Zohar* 3:161b–174a.

The clause “when the time comes that we see face-to-face” may refer to the Messianic encounter with the Divine Presence. It may also reflect the author’s yearning to remove the pseudonymous mask of Rabbi Shim’on and reveal his own identity. The phrase “will consent with one another” means that all will agree that the secret should be revealed.

On the tension between revealing and concealing, see M *Kelim* 17:16; *Tosefta Kelim (Bava Metsi’a)* 7:9; BT *Bava Batra* 89b; *Zohar* 1:11b (Vol. 1, p. 78, n. 589); 2:95a, 100b, 123b, 257b; 3:127b (*IR*); and 3:74b: “Rabbi Shim’on clapped his hands and wept. He exclaimed, ‘Woe is me if I

speak and reveal the secret! Woe is me if I do not speak, for the Companions will be deprived of the word.’”

64. **the sin committed by the outsiders…** According to rabbinic tradition, it was not the Israelites who initiated the sin of the Golden Calf but rather the mixed multitude, the hordes who accompanied them out of Egypt. Rabbi Shim’on explains that this was a sin against *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Elohim* and Glory. By demanding that Aaron fashion *Elohim*, the mixed multitude were seeking to replace *Shekhinah* (the true *Elohim*) with the Golden Calf (a false *elohim*), a mere *image of a bull*. This grave sin caused *Shekhinah* to eventually be exiled along with the Israelites.

On the mixed multitude, see Exodus 12:38: *A mixed multitude also went up with them*. On the mixed multitude’s responsibility for the sin of the Golden Calf, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 27:8; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 9:7–8; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 21, 30; *Emor* 11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Emor* 15; *Shemot Rabbah* 42:6; *Zohar* 2:45b.

On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 37. On the lasting effects of the sin of the Golden Calf, see BT *Sanhedrin* 102a, in the name of Rabbi Yitshak: “Every single punishment that comes upon the world has within it one twenty-fourth of the overbalance of a pound [i.e., a tiny bit] of the first calf, as is said: *On the day I make a reckoning, I will make a reckoning with them for their sin* (Exodus 32:34).”

The verse in Exodus 32 reads in full: *The people saw that Moses lagged in coming down from the mountain, and the people assembled against Aaron and said to him, “Rise up, make us Elohim, gods, that will go before us, for this man Moses who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him.”* The full verse in Psalms reads: *They exchanged their glory for the image of a bull eating grass*. See *Zohar* 2:237a. The verse in Samuel was spoken by the daughter-in-law of Eli the priest as she lay dying in childbirth after the Ark of *Elohim* was captured by

the Philistines; it reads in full: *She said, "Glory is exiled from Israel, for the Ark of Elohim is taken."*

65. **Below, within the dregs of wine…** Wine symbolizes *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment), whose dregs are the source of evil. The Primordial Demon, personifying all demonic forces, is the counterpart of Primordial Adam, who personifies all holy forces. He seeks to encroach on holiness and draw its potency. Then, he assumes physical form in order to enter the world.

According to rabbinic sources, Israel worshiped the Golden Calf as an imitation of the bull in the Divine Chariot (as described by the prophet Ezekiel). See *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 21: "The blessed Holy One said to him [Moses], '… I see them coming to Sinai and receiving My Torah, and I descend on Sinai in My chariot of four animals, on which they gaze, and they unhitch one of them and thus arouse My anger'—as is said: *the face of* שור (*shor*), *a bull* [or: *an ox*], *on the left*… (Ezekiel 1:10), and it is written: *They exchanged their glory for the image of a bull*."

Here Rabbi Shim'on associates the bull with the demonic power, which originates from the left side. The Golden Calf is the Primordial Demon's vehicle for invading the world.

The references to "four נזיקין (*neziqin*), damagers [literally, damages]," and "primary causes of damage" derive from M *Bava Qamma* 1:1, which lists four classifications of damage: "The four primary causes of damage are the ox, the pit, the crop-destroying beast, and the outbreak of fire." See *Zohar* 3:172a. The word מזיקא (*mazziqa*), "demon," which appears earlier in this paragraph, derives from the root נזק (*nzq*), "to harm, injure, damage."

On the relation between the Golden Calf and the image of the bull in the Divine Chariot, see *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 6; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:29; BT *Ḥagigah* 13b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:2; 4:3; 42:5; 43:8; *Midrash Tehillim* 106:6; Naḥmanides on Exodus 32:1;

Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:52–53, n. 271; Lieberman, in Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, 122–23, n. 24; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 183–84. On the demonic nature of the ox (or bull), see *Zohar* 1:166b, 172b; 2:6a, 64b–65a, 236b–237a, 240b; 3:86b, 186a, 207a.

66. **What is *eating grass*?...** The demonic power draws sustenance only from grass, not from the various species of grain.

"The seven species of grain" apparently include "the five species of grain" often referred to in rabbinic literature (wheat, barley, oats, spelt, and rye), plus rice and millet. See M *Ḥallah* 1:1, *Pesaḥim* 2:5; *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 8; BT *Berakhot* 35b, 36b–37b; *Zohar* 1:157a; 3:189a, 244a. Cf. Deuteronomy 8:8, which lists seven species of grain and fruit.

The full verse in Psalms reads: *They exchanged their glory for the image of a bull eating grass*. For the earlier interpretation of *eating grass*, see *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 6: "Nothing is more disgusting and repulsive than an ox [or: bull] when it is eating grass."

On the contrast between a simple interpretation and "the essence of the matter," see Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 2a: "I have not come here for דרשא (*derasha*), [homiletical or midrashic] interpretation, but rather for the essence of the matter." See *Zohar* 1:213a; 2:145a, 175a; *ZḤ* 25d (*MhN*), 86a–b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 307; Matt, "New-Ancient Words," 198.

67. **Therefore Mother was not there...** Because the mixed multitude rejected *Shekhinah* (the Mother) by demanding that Aaron replace Her with the Golden Calf, She was not present and could not restrain the Divine Father's wrath. Therefore the blessed Holy One prodded Moses. See above, notes 56–57, 64.

The secret of *Shekhinah*'s role should not be revealed, so that people will continue to believe that the divine lash is ready to strike and will thus retain their fear of punishment.

68. **The mixed multitude…** According to rabbinic tradition, it was not the Israelites who initiated the sin of the Golden Calf but rather the mixed multitude. (See above, note 64.) Here Rabbi Shim'on explains that the (collective) singular verb עלה (*alah*), *went up*, indicates that this multitude was all of one nation, namely Egypt. Specifically, they were the Egyptian sorcerers who tried to imitate God's miraculous plagues but eventually recognized His power and then approached Moses, seeking to become Israelites.

On the mixed multitude being Egyptians, see Ibn Ezra (short and long) on Exodus 12:38; *Zohar* 2:45b. According to a midrashic interpretation, when God said to Moses, *Your people that you brought up from the land of Egypt has acted corruptly* (Exodus 32:7), He was referring to the mixed multitude, whom Moses had accepted against God's advice. See *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 21, 30; *Shemot Rabbah* 42:6; Rashi on Exodus 32:7; Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 31:18; *Zohar* 1:25a (*TZ*); 2:45b; 3:276b (*RM*); *TZ* 13, 28b.

Exodus 32:1 reads in full: *The people saw that Moses lagged in coming down from the mountain, and the people assembled against Aaron and said to him, "Rise up, make us Elohim, gods, that will go before us, for this man Moses who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him."* The verse in Exodus 7 reads in full: *Pharaoh too called for the sages and sorcerers, and they too, the soothsayers of Egypt, did thus with their spells*. The region of Togarmah is located in Asia Minor; see Genesis 10:3; Ezekiel 27:14; 38:6.

69. **headed by Yannes and Yambres…** Two prominent Egyptian sorcerers.

Rabbi Shim'on explains the name ערב רב (*erev rav*), *mixed multitude*, as referring to ערב רברבא (*erev ravreva*), "great evening," based roughly on what is known in rabbinic literature as מנחה גדולה (*minḥah gedolah*), "great afternoon." See BT *Berakhot* 26b: "Which is *minḥah gedolah*, the great afternoon? From six-and-a-half hours onward [i.e., from

12:30 P.M. until 6 P.M., according to the rabbinic practice of dividing the daytime into twelve equal parts, which together extend from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M.]. Which is the small afternoon? From nine-and-a-half hours onward [i.e., from 3:30 P.M. until 6 P.M.].” Here, the eminent sorcerers gaze “from the beginning of the seventh hour to the beginning of the ninth” (i.e., from 1 P.M. until 3 P.M.), whereas the minor sorcerers gaze “from the beginning of the ninth [i.e., from 3 P.M.] until midnight.” According to the *Zohar*, during the afternoon and through the first half of the night, the power of *Din* (Judgment) dominates.

On Yannes and Yambres, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 1:15; 7:11; BT *Menaḥot* 85a; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 19; *Midrash Avkir*, 43 (quoted in *Yalqut Shim’oni*, Exodus 235); *Havdalah de-Rabbi Aqiva*, 178–79. (In *Menaḥot* and *Avkir* they are called Yoḥana and Mamre.) According to various sources, they were Balaam’s two sons. See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Numbers 22:22; *Yalqut Shim’oni*, Exodus 168, 176; below at note 88; *Zohar* 3:194a.

70. **995 rungs begin to roam...** The demonic rungs roam over their mountain abode. See *Zohar* 3:196a.

On the two evenings, or afternoons, see the preceding note. The verse in Exodus reads: ערב רב (*Erev rav*), *A mixed multitude* [or: *a great mixture*, understood here as *a great evening*], *also went up with them*.

71. **Their wisdom was great...** The sorcerers observed the time precisely and they knew that Moses was characterized by the number six, as indicated by the wording *Moses* בֹּשֵׁשׁ (*voshesh*), *lagged*, which can also be read as *Moses* בְּשֵׁשׁ (*be-shesh*), *was in six*. Moses symbolizes *Tif’eret*, which embraces six *sefirot* (from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*), corresponding to the first six hours of the day, during which the demonic and magical forces have no power. He was destined to descend Mount Sinai in the sixth hour of the day.

On the word בֹּשֵׁשׁ (*voshesh*), *lagged*, as alluding to the number שש (*shesh*), "six," see JT *Ta'anit* 4:6, 68b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 18:6; BT *Shabbat* 89a; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 19; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tissa* 13; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 10, 40a; *Shemot Rabbah* 41:7; *Midrash Ḥaserot vi-Yterot*, (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:264).

72. **he alone was the totality of Israel...** Blending two different midrashic traditions, Rabbi Shim'on indicates that Moses embodied the entire people of Israel and that he received the book of Esther on Mount Sinai. Both of these ideas now emerge from a creative reading of the verse in Esther, which employs the (collective) singular קבל (*qibbel*), "he received," rather than the plural קבלו (*qibbelu*), "they received." This singular form refers to Moses, who embodied all היהודים (*ha-yehudim*), *the Jews*, and who *received* not only the Torah but also the scroll of Esther, which contains this verse.

On Moses being equivalent to all of Israel, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 1, 9; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1, 13; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 11:25; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:15; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 10; *Zohar* 2:47a; 3:9a; Moses de León, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 378.

On the scroll of Esther being given at Mount Sinai, see JT *Megillah* 1:4, 70d; *Rut Rabbah* 4:5. On the wording וקבל היהודים (*ve-qibbel ha-yehudim*), *The Jews received*, see JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 96, p. 1203; *Rut Rabbah* 4:5; *Tanḥuma, Vayḥi* 8 (all referring to Esther 9:27 and all applying the singular verb not to Moses but to God or His heavenly court). Esther 9:23 reads in full: וקבל היהודים (*Ve-qibbel ha-yehudim*), *The Jews accepted* [or: *received, adopted, undertook*], *what they had begun to practice and what Mordecai prescribed for them*.

73. **Why *against Aaron*?...** Aaron symbolizes *Ḥesed*, on the right side. The mixed multitude "sought the left side," namely *Din* (Judgment), known as *Elohim*; but in order to include the left "in the right," they gathered against Aaron.

The name *Elohim* also suggests אלהים אחרים (*elohim aḥerim*), *other gods* (Exodus 20:3).

74. ***That* ילכו (*yelekhu*), *will go*...** The plural form *yelekhu* refers to six aspects of *Din* (which is known as *Elohim*), each associated with one of the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. The higher *sefirah*, *Binah*, is also known as *Elohim*, but She "is not included in the total."

For the full verse in Exodus, see above toward the end of note 68.

75. **he never mentioned the name *Elohim*...** Moses used the name *YHVH* rather than *Elohim* because the latter name (signifying *Din* on the left side) could have bolstered Pharaoh. Furthermore, the Egyptian ruler was unfamiliar with the name *YHVH*, as he admitted: *Who is YHVH, that I should heed His voice to let Israel go? I do not know YHVH, nor will I let Israel go* (Exodus 5:2). Moses continued using the name *YHVH* so as not to empower the Other Side. Now, at Mount Sinai, the mixed multitude sought the power of the left side and therefore demanded from Aaron, *Rise up, make us Elohim*, which had "been thrust away until now" by the fact that Moses had avoided this name.

On the contrast between the names *YHVH* and *Elohim*, see above, pp. 54–55, n. 143.

76. **For you, *YHVH was going before them*...** Just as *YHVH was going before* Israel, so the mixed multitude wanted the power of the left side (associated with the name *Elohim*) to *go before* them. In order to provide a physical base and vehicle for this power, they forced Aaron to fashion the Golden Calf.

The full verse in Exodus 13 reads: *YHVH was going before them by day in a column of cloud to lead them on the way, and by night in a column of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and by night*.

77. **sheep and oxen, eating grass...** Recalling the image in Psalms 106:20: *They exchanged their glory for the*

image of a bull [or: *ox*] *eating grass*. See above at notes 64–66.

78. **mixed multitude did not eat the manna** Which appeared only on the ground beneath the clouds.

79. **what was left behind the millstones…** On the connection between manna and millstones, see Numbers 11:8: *The people would roam around and gather it and grind it between millstones or pound it in a mortar, cook it in a kettle and make it into cakes. It tasted like the cream of oil*.

The phrase "behind the millstones" appears in Exodus 11:5, describing the victims of the last of the ten plagues (the killing of the firstborn): *Every firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones, and every firstborn of the beasts*. In the *Zohar* this phrase often refers to the demonic realm, the source of magic and sorcery. See 1:48a, 118a, 177a, 223b; 2:28a, 37b, 56b, 80a.

According to a midrashic tradition, the nations got to taste a residue of the manna. See *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 4; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:21; cf. *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 16:21. The question מן הוא (*Man hu*), *What is it?* represents a folk etymology of מן (*man*), "manna."

80. **but there were many from Israel…** Although the mixed multitude demanded that Aaron make the Golden Calf, many Israelites participated in the sin by desiring to worship it.

On the potion that Moses made them drink, see Exodus 32:20: *He took the calf that they had made and burned it in fire and ground it fine and scattered it upon the water and made the Children of Israel drink it*. See below, notes 97, 106; *Zohar* 3:38a.

81. **While they are quarreling…** Aaron was trying to stall the mixed multitude, figuring that their wives and children would refuse to part with their jewelry.

See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 45; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Exodus 32:2; Rashi on Exodus 32:2. According to several midrashic sources, the Israelite women refused to donate their gold jewelry because they did not believe in idolatry or because they refused to deny God, who had delivered them miraculously from Egypt. See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 45; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 19; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pinḥas* 7. Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 32:3.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *Tear off* [or: *break off, take off*] *the golden rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me*.

82. **Converts are as hard for Israel…** See BT *Yevamot* 109b, in the name of Rabbi Ḥelbo, "Converts are as hard for Israel as a scab on the skin." For the wording here ("as a scab on raw flesh"), see Isaac Alfasi on BT *Shabbat* 39b; *Sekhel Tov*, Genesis 17:14.

The adult males among the mixed multitude were so eager to worship a false god that they *tore off the golden rings that were on their* [own] *ears*. See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 32:3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 45; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 19, *Pinḥas* 7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pinḥas* 7; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 21:10; Rashi on Exodus 32:2.

83. ***He took from their hand…*** Tragically, Aaron took the gold from the hands of Yannes and Yambres, the two leading sorcerers of the mixed multitude.

The phrase "one, two, in the hand of one, and a third in the hand of the other" means that one of them held two-thirds of the gold (or of some of the gold) and the other held one-third.

On Yannes and Yambres, see above, note 69. The verse in Exodus reads: *He took from their hand* ויצר אתו בחרט (*va-yatsar oto ba-ḥeret*), *and he fashioned it with a graving tool* [or: *and he fashioned it in a mold*, or: *and he wrapped it in a bag*], *and made it into a molten calf. And they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land*

of Egypt!” On the possible renderings of *va-yatsar oto ba-ḥeret*, see Sarna, *Exodus*, ad loc.

84. **O pious, holy one!...** Aaron the high priest, who was anointed to serve God, sought to stall the mixed multitude and separate them from the Israelites, but he did not know how to protect himself from the sorcerers and his pious intention had tragic consequences.

85. **When six hours arrived...** At noon, precisely in the middle of the day, the sorcerers took the gold. The mixed multitude had been so eager to remove their gold earrings that in the process they tore their earlobes.

On the significance of the hours of the day, see above, notes 69, 71. The verse in Exodus reads: ויתפרקו כל העם (*Va-yitparequ kol ha-am*), *All the people tore off* [or: *broke off, took off*], *the golden rings that were on their ears and brought them to Aaron*. The verse in Kings, describing Elijah’s encounter with God, reads: *Behold, YHVH was passing by, and a great, mighty wind* מפרק (*mephareq*), *tearing out* [or: *splitting*], *mountains and smashing rocks before YHVH*....

86. ***His master shall make him approach the gods...*** A slave who refuses to be set free after six years of servitude is required to have his ear pierced. According to rabbinic interpretation, this particular organ is pierced because it heard at Sinai that Israel should serve only God and thus not any human being.

Here Rabbi Shim’on applies this teaching to the mixed multitude who were so eager to serve a false god that they tore off their own gold earrings, injuring their earlobes in the process and demonstrating that they were not true Israelites. See above, note 82.

For the rabbinic interpretation of the verse in Exodus, see *Tosefta Bava Qamma* 7:5; JT *Qiddushin* 1:2, 59b; BT *Qiddushin* 22b; Cf. *Mekhilta, Neziqin* 2. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *For Mine are the Children of Israel as servants; they are My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt. I am YHVH your God*.

87. **The two of them divided that gold…** Yannes and Yambres performed sorcery with the gold (or with some of the gold), one of them holding two-thirds, and the other, one-third. See above, note 83.

Apparently, the wording in Exodus—מידם (*mi-yadam*), literally *from their hand*, rather than מידיהם (*mi-ydeihem*), *from their hands*—implies the minimal plural, namely from the hands of only the two chief sorcerers: Yannes and Yambres.

On the significance of the hours of the day, see above, notes 69, 71. The phrase in Proverbs, *hand to hand*, is apparently an oath formula. Here, it implies "from the hand of the sorcerers to the hand of Aaron." *The evil one* refers to those who sinned at the incident of the Golden Calf, as indicated by Aaron's characterization of the Israelites when he says to Moses, *"Let not my lord's wrath flare. You yourself know this people, that it is bent on evil."*

On the Golden Calf as a vehicle for evil, see above, note 65. On the evil consequences of the Golden Calf, see BT *Sanhedrin* 102a, in the name of Rabbi Yitshak: "Every single punishment that comes upon the world has within it one twenty-fourth of the overbalance of a pound [i.e., a tiny bit] of the first calf, as is said: *On the day I make a reckoning, I will make a reckoning with them for their sin* (Exodus 32:34)."

The clause ובלטו בלטיהון (*u-vlatu be-lateihon* [or *balteihon*]), "and cast their spells," is based on בלטיהם (*be-lateihem*), *with their spells* (Exodus 7:22; 8:3, 14), where the plural possessive form of the noun לט (*lat*), "occult skill, magic," is preceded by the preposition ב (*be*), *with* Here, playfully, the author turns the prepositional letter ב (*bet*) into part of a neologistic verb בלט (*blt*), "to work magic, cast a spell." (Similarly, perhaps the second word of the clause should be construed as *balteihon*, as if the singular absolute noun is *balta*—a neologistic noun matching the sense of the neologistic verb.)

88. **sons of Balaam the wicked…** According to Rabbi Shim’on, the sorcerers Yannes and Yambres were the sons of Balaam, whose father Beor is identical with Laban (Rebekah’s brother). They understood that *Shekhinah*, the Cup of Blessing, receives the flow of emanation from *Ḥesed*, on the right side. Being themselves linked to the left side, they approached Aaron (who symbolizes *Ḥesed*) so that he would invigorate and complete them.

On Yannes and Yambres as Balaam’s sons, see above, note 69. On Laban as Balaam’s father, Beor, see BT *Sanhedrin* 105b; *Zohar* 1:126a; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:303, n. 229; 6:123, n. 722. Cf. Vol. 3, p. 7, n. 50. On the Cup of Blessing as symbolizing *Shekhinah* and on its connection with the right side, see above, note 40.

89. **As soon as the seventh hour … arrived…** Now that the power of Judgment was dominant, they gave the gold to Aaron. Tragically, he took it directly from their hands. If he had instructed them to place the gold on the ground, this would have neutralized their sorcery.

On the significance of the seventh hour, see above, note 69. Regarding the effect of the ground on sorcery, see JT *Ḥagigah* 2:2, 77d–78a, where, conversely, the power of witches depends on their feet touching the ground. See *Ba’alei ha-Tosafot* on Exodus 8:14; *Sefer Ḥasidim*, ed. Margaliot, 472.

90. ***He fashioned it with a ḥeret…*** This clause has been interpreted in several ways, including: *He fashioned it with a graving tool*, and *He wrapped it in a bag*. Here Rabbi Shim’on adopts the latter interpretation, explaining that Aaron was misled by demonic forces. Rather than neutralizing the magical power of the gold by throwing it to the ground, he concealed it and thereby enabled the sorcerers’ plan to succeed.

On the various possible meanings of *va-yatsar oto ba-ḥeret*, see above, note 83. On *ḥeret* as “bag,” cf. the plural of חריט (*ḥarit*) in 2 Kings 5:23; Isaiah 3:22; and see Rashi, Rashbam,

Bekhor Shor, Ḥizzequni on Exodus 32:4. “A chisel” is a conjectural and contextual rendering of מחוגה (*meḥugah*), literally “a compass”; see Isaiah 44:13.

91. **In the Book of Enoch…** In this mysterious book Rabbi Shim’on saw a teaching about Israel (the “only son”), born to the divine White Head. When the Egyptian sorcerers come, they will deceive the people of Israel through Aaron, who bears the priestly breastpiece (a kind of pouch) and the ephod (a splendid apron), both of which contain precious stones engraved with the names of the twelve tribes. The hem of Aaron’s robe is decorated with colored tassels and gold bells.

The Book of Enoch interprets the word חרט (*ḥeret*) as *a graving tool* (see the preceding note), which it associates with the implement used by Adam’s grandson Enosh, who fashioned idols and enticed people to worship them.

On the Book of Enoch, see above, p. 8, n. 21. For various interpretations of the passage quoted here, see *Or Yaqar*; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; Scholem; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the White Head, see *Zohar* 1:107b (*ST*), 147a (*Tos*); 2:74a (*RR*); 3:129b (*IR*), 135a–b (*IR*), 137b (*IR*), 288a (*IZ*), 292b (*IZ*).

The phrase “of donkeys’ flesh” alludes to Egyptians, based on Ezekiel 23:20: *She* [Jerusalem] *lusted after their* [Egypt’s] *paramours, whose flesh is the flesh of donkeys and whose emission is the emission of stallions*. In this verse the word בשר (*basar*), *flesh*, is a euphemism for “penis.” See Leviticus 15:2; Ezekiel 16:26; *Zohar* 1:117a (*MhN*), 173a, 222b; 3:14b.

On Aaron’s precious stones and gold bells, see Exodus 28. On pearls and gold, cf. above at note 6: “gold and all מרגלן סומקן (*margelan sumqan*), red pearls,” i.e., rubies.

The phrase בחרט אנוש (*be-ḥeret enosh*), *with the stylus of a human*, appears in Isaiah 8:1. Concerning the generation of Enosh, Genesis 4:26 states: *Then for the first time the name YHVH was invoked*. In midrashic literature this is taken to

mean that Enosh's generation was the first to worship idols and address them by the name *YHVH*.

See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 6; *Bereshit Rabbah* 23:7; *Targum Yerushalmi* and Rashi, ad loc.; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Avodah Zarah* 1:1; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:151, n. 54.

92. **It was all...** Both interpretations of the word חרט (*ḥeret*) apply: "graving tool" and "bag." Aaron used a stylus, as indicated in the Book of Enoch, yet he first concealed the gold in a bag.

93. **What shall I do?...** On the tension between revealing and concealing, see above, note 63.

94. **On the side of Holiness...** In the divine realm, *Malkhut* (or *Shekhinah*), who is known as *Elohim*, is empowered by three elements, each of which is referred to in this verse from Exodus. In later Kabbalah these three elements represent three worlds beneath the sefirotic world of אצילות (*atsilut*), "Emanation," but that sense does not necessarily pertain here.

"Something that until now contained nothing at all" apparently refers to the formless shape of the gold, which corresponds to the formlessness or nothingness that precedes Creation. The sorcerers are considered incomparable because they deceived Aaron into misusing all three of these elements for idolatry.

On Creation, Formation, and Actualization, see Abraham bar Hiyya, *Megillat ha-Megalleh*, 15–16; *Bahir* 10 (13); *Zohar* 1:177b; 2:155a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 38 (and Wolfson's n. 12), 46–47, 407–8; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 39–40; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 8 (11); Scholem, *Le-Ḥeqer Qabbalat R. Yitsḥaq ben Ya'aqov ha-Kohen*, 72–81; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:555–58, 687–88. On the verse from Exodus and its various possible meanings, see above, notes 83, 90.

95. **Is it not written *I threw it into the fire...*** This verse indicates that Aaron did not fashion the Golden Calf;

rather, it came out of the fire by itself. If so, how can Scripture state *he made it into a molten calf*? Rabbi Shim'on explains that because Aaron *took* [the gold] *from their hand* and concealed it by wrapping it *in a bag*, he failed to nullify their sorcery and actually contributed to its success; so it is as if *he made it*.

See above, notes 89–90. Exodus 32:24, which records Aaron's lame excuse to Moses, reads in full: *I said to them, "Whoever has gold, take* [or: *tear*] *it off!" They gave it to me and I threw it into the fire and out came this calf*. Exodus 32:4 reads: *He took from their hand and he fashioned it with a graving tool* [or: *and he fashioned it in a mold*, or: *and he wrapped it in a bag*] *and made it into a molten calf*. See above, notes 83, 90. Exodus 32:20 reads in full: *He took the calf that they had made and burned it in fire and ground it fine and scattered it upon the water and made the Children of Israel drink it*.

96. **They drew two spirits as one…** The sorcerers attracted both a male and a female demonic spirit. As mentioned above (at note 65), the ox (or bull) is the Primordial Demon's vehicle for invading the world. The donkey symbolizes Egypt, the sorcerers' home. Both of these spirits were combined in the Golden Calf.

On the demonic nature of the ox and donkey, see *Zohar* 1:166b, 172b; 2:6a, 64b–65a; 3:86b, 207a. The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *She* [Jerusalem] *lusted after their* [Egypt's] *paramours, whose flesh is the flesh of donkeys and whose emission is the emission of stallions*. See above, note 91.

97. **had joined with them in their hearts…** Believing in the divinity of the Golden Calf. See above, note 80.

The mixed multitude declared: *These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!* The plural pronoun *these* refers to the two demonic spirits represented by the images of the ox and donkey. Similarly with the plural verb העלוך (*he'elukha*), *brought you up*, rather than the singular form העלך (*he'elekha*).

On the significance of the plural, *these*, see JT *Sanhedrin* 10:2, 28b; BT *Avodah Zarah* 53b; *Shemot Rabbah* 42:3; cf. *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 43. On the significance of the plural, *he'elukha, brought you up*, see BT *Sanhedrin* 63a.

98. **There were 120 hundredweights in it…** If the Golden Calf weighed this much, how could Yannes and Yambres possibly have held all that gold *in their hand*?

See *Shemot Rabbah* 42:8: "Rabbi Tanḥum son of Ḥanilai said, 'There were 125 hundredweights of gold in the calf, the numerical value of מסכה (*massekhah*), *molten* [*calf*] (Exodus 32:4): מ (*mem*) is forty, ס (*samekh*) is sixty, כ (*khaf*) is twenty, and ה (*he*) is five.' Rabbi Levi says in the name of Rabbi Ḥama son of Ḥanina, 'One hundred and twenty, the numerical value of מסך (*mskh*),' for he ignores the ה (*he*) [which is unpronounced]." Here, *Or Yaqar* and the Cremona and Mantua editions preserve the reading "120 hundredweights," which *Derekh Emet* (ed. Ḥamiẓ), followed by later printed editions, emended to "125 hundredweights."

"Hundredweights" renders קנטרין (*qinterin*), based on Latin *centenarium* and Greek *kentenarion*, "one hundred Roman pounds." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 58:7; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 10:1.

99. ***Aaron saw, and he built an altar before it…*** According to a rabbinic tradition, Aaron built the altar slowly all by himself, trying to delay until Moses would return. Here, Rabbi Shim'on offers another explanation of Aaron's good intention.

On the "two [spirits] drawn from the Other Side," see above, note 96. On Aaron's delaying tactics in building the altar, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 10:3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tissa* 13; *Shemot Rabbah* 41:7; Rashi on Exodus 32:5. The full verse in Exodus reads: *Aaron saw, and he built an altar before it, and Aaron called out and said, "Tomorrow is a festival to YHVH!"*

100. **This may be compared to a robber…** Similarly, Aaron confronted the demonic Golden Calf with *Malkhut* (Kingdom), symbolized by the altar, thereby draining the Other Side of its power.

On the association of "remedy" with the altar, see 1 Kings 18:30, regarding Elijah: *He healed* [i.e., repaired] *the wrecked altar of* YHVH. See *Zohar* 1:66b.

"Legionnaire" renders לגיון (*ligyon*), derived from Greek *legeon* and Latin *legio*, "legion." In rabbinic literature, the term applies to a legion of troops or a legate, and here, to a soldier or officer. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:6; *Zohar* 1:166b–167a; 2:121b, 125a.

101. ***A festival to YHVH…*** If Aaron had not applied the remedy of building the altar, the unchecked demonic force would have destroyed the world.

On the precise wording *to* YHVH, rather than *to the calf*, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 10:3.

102. **Despite all this…** Even though Aaron's intention was good, God punished him with the death of his two sons, Nadab and Abihu, who died when they *offered alien fire before* YHVH. In effect, they were "seized" for the sin of the Golden Calf.

Whereas Aaron placed the holy altar before the demonic calf, his sons placed demonic *alien fire before* YHVH. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *The sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, each took his fire-pan and put fire in it and placed incense upon it and offered alien fire before* YHVH, *which He had not commanded them*.

On Aaron's punishment, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 7:1; 10:5; *Tanḥuma, Tetsavveh* 10, *Aḥarei Mot* 8; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Aḥarei Mot* 12; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 47, 189a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:47 (all quoting the verses in Deuteronomy and Amos). The full verse in Deuteronomy (spoken by Moses) reads: *With Aaron,* YHVH *was greatly enough incensed to destroy him, and I interceded also in behalf of Aaron at that time*. The verse in Amos is directed against the Amorites.

103. **in the meantime Moses would come…** Aaron sought to delay the celebration by saying *"A festival to YHVH tomorrow!"* because he thought that by then Moses would return. If Aaron had built the altar in honor of the Golden Calf (as many people assume), then Moses would certainly have smashed the altar. Rather, because Aaron built the altar to weaken the Other Side, Moses did not smash it, but rather destroyed the Golden Calf.

The altar at Bethel was constructed by King Jeroboam as part of the worship of one of the two golden calves that he built. For the prophecy directed against this altar, see 1 Kings 13:1–3. Although the prophet is not named, he is traditionally identified as Iddo.

See *Seder Olam Rabbah* 20; *Tosefta Sanhedrin* 14:15; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 18:19; 33:1; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 177; BT *Sanhedrin* 89b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 2:6; *Tanḥuma, Toledot* 12, *Ki Tissa* 6; Rashi and David Kimḥi on 1 Kings 13:1; *Zohar* 2:64a; 3:156b, 288a (*IZ*). For biblical references to Iddo, see 2 Chronicles 9:29; 12:15; 13:22.

On Aaron's delaying by saying *A festival to YHVH tomorrow!* see *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 19; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Exodus 32:5; Naḥmanides on Exodus 32:5. On his delaying tactics in building the altar, see above, note 99. The full verse in Exodus reads: *He took the calf that they had made and burned it in fire and ground it fine and scattered it upon the water and made the Children of Israel drink it*.

104. ***Aaron called out…*** The verbal analogy between Aaron's and Jonah's "calling out" indicates that just as Jonah predicted the execution of harsh Judgment against the city of Nineveh, so Aaron hinted that Judgment would be executed against those who worshiped the Golden Calf.

105. ***A festival to YHVH … to execute Judgment…*** Aaron prophesied by the Holy Spirit emanating from *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the altar.

106. **There were three judgments...** Three different punishments were inflicted upon various groups who sinned in the incident of the Golden Calf. Some perished in a plague brought by God; others were killed by the Levites; others died after Moses made them drink the potion containing the dust of the calf. Each of these punishments corresponds to one word of the sentence חג ליהוה מחר (*ḥag le-YHVH maḥar*), *A festival to YHVH tomorrow!*

The verse describing the plague reads in full: *YHVH plagued the people for having made the calf that Aaron made*. The attack by the Levites is described in Exodus 32:25–29. The full verse describing the potion (Exodus 32:20) reads: *He took the calf that they had made and burned it in fire and ground it fine and scattered it upon the water and made the Children of Israel drink it*. See above, note 80.

According to a rabbinic tradition, when Moses made the Israelites drink the water mixed with the dust of the calf, he was testing them to determine who had betrayed the Torah by worshiping the Golden Calf, as a suspected straying wife is tested by being made to drink a potion. If the wife had committed adultery, *her belly will swell and her thigh sag* (Numbers 5:27). Similarly here, those Israelites drinking the potion who had sinned in the incident of the calf (even by just desiring to worship it) "were found bloated and dead; that water churned in their intestines all night, and in the morning they were found dead."

On the ordeal of the suspected straying wife, see Numbers 5:11–31. On the rabbinic interpretation linking this ordeal to the incident of the Golden Calf, see *Tosefta Avodah Zarah* 3:19; JT *Sotah* 3:4, 19a; *Avodah Zarah* 3:3, 42d; BT *Avodah Zarah* 43b–44a; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 26; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 10, 38a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 9:48; *Zohar* 2:113b. Cf. BT *Yoma* 66b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 45.

A number of these sources (JT *Sotah*; BT *Yoma*; *Tanḥuma*; *Pesiqta Rabbati*; *Bemidbar Rabbah*) specify

which of the three punishments applied to which group of sinners, depending on exactly how they participated in the worship of the calf, or on whether they were warned and/or witnessed. According to the passage in *Yoma*, "Whoever sacrificed and burned incense [died] by the sword; whoever embraced and kissed [the calf], by death [at the hands of Heaven]; whoever rejoiced in his heart, [died] of dropsy." Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *she-ma'aseh*, explains that "by sword" refers to the attack by the Levites; "by death" refers to the plague brought by God; and "of dropsy" refers to the ordeal of drinking the potion containing the dust of the calf, which caused bloating for the guilty.

107. **regarding that altar…** When Moses descended from Mount Sinai and saw the sinful worship of the Golden Calf, the verse specifies that *he saw the calf and the dancing*, whereas "the altar is not mentioned," because Aaron had built it with pure intention: in order to thwart the Other Side. See above, notes 99–101.

The full verse in Exodus 32 reads: *As he drew near the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses' wrath flared, and he flung the tablets from his hands and smashed them at the foot of the mountain*.

108. **they were not Israelites…** The perpetrators of the sin of the Golden Calf were the mixed multitude, not the Israelites. But when King Jeroboam built two golden calves, these were, in fact, constructed by and for Israelites. How could this be?

On the responsibility of the mixed multitude, see above, note 64. On Jeroboam's building two golden calves, see 1 Kings 12–13.

109. **But Jeroboam sinned…** See M *Avot* 5:18: "Jeroboam sinned and caused many to sin; the sin of the many is attributed to him."

According to 1 Kings 12:27–29, Jeroboam (who ruled the northern kingdom of Israel) built the calves because he wanted to dissuade the Israelites from making pilgrimage

to Jerusalem, where they would acknowledge King Rehoboam of Judah; Jeroboam feared that after those Israelites returned home, they would kill him. In BT *Sanhedrin* 101b, Rav Naḥman explains Jeroboam's motivation as follows: "He said, 'It is a tradition that none but the kings of the house of Judah may sit in the Temple Court. When they see Rehoboam sitting and me standing, they will think, "The former is the king and the latter his subject." And if I sit too, I am rebelling against the kingdom, and they will kill me, and follow him.'"

The biblical and rabbinic accounts imply that Jeroboam was not motivated by a desire to worship idols. Here, Rabbi Shim'on insists that, in fact, the wicked king intended to attract and empower demonic forces through this idolatrous worship. The phrase "sinning against the Kingdom" recalls the expression in *Sanhedrin* "rebelling against the kingdom," but refers primarily to the Kingdom of Heaven, identical with *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom). Like the mixed multitude, Jeroboam was sinning against Her.

110. **heart of the whole world...** See *Tanḥuma, Qedoshim* 10: "The land of Israel sits in the center of the world, Jerusalem in the center of the land of Israel, the Temple in the center of Jerusalem, the sanctuary in the center of the Temple, the ark in the center of the sanctuary, and in front of the ark the Foundation Stone, from which the world was founded." See above, pp. 36–37, n. 93. On Jerusalem (or the Holy of Holies) as literally "the heart of the world," see *Zohar* 1:84b; 3:161b; *TZ* 21, 49b, 50b.

King Jeroboam realized that he could not draw the side of Holiness to his capital, Shechem, located well north of Jerusalem; so instead, he sought to attract the demonic Other Side by means of two calves.

On the demonic force clothing itself in the image of a bull (or ox), see above, note 65. The context in 1 Kings (12:28–29) reads: *The king took counsel, and he made two*

golden calves. He said to [*the people*], *"It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem* [or: *You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough*]. *Here are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!" He set up one in Bethel, and the other he placed in Dan*.

111. **Why two calves?...** There are two demonic spirits, one male and one female, symbolized respectively by the bull (or ox) and the donkey. The two Egyptian sorcerers, Yannes and Yambres, were linked to the donkey, since that animal represents Egypt (as indicated in the verse from Ezekiel). Thus they were able to include in the single Golden Calf not only the spirit of the bull, but also that of the donkey. Jeroboam, however, had to fashion two calves, one in Bethel to clothe the male demonic spirit, and one in Dan to clothe the female demonic spirit. The Israelites were especially seduced by the latter, although it was located far to the north.

By sinning and causing Israel to sin, Jeroboam ruined the union of the divine couple (or parents), *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, who are alluded to in the verse from Proverbs. This interpretation of *father and mother* as divine parents derives from BT *Berakhot* 35b: "Rabbi Ḥanina son of Papa said, 'Whoever enjoys this world without reciting a blessing —it is as if he robs the blessed Holy One and Assembly of Israel, as is said: *He who robs his father and mother and says, "It is no crime," is partner to a destroyer—father* is none other than the blessed Holy One … and *mother* is none other than Assembly of Israel.'"

In this Talmudic passage, Assembly of Israel apparently refers to a supernal hypostasis (the mother of Israel), as it does regularly in Kabbalah, designating *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:77a (*ST*); 2:124b, 250a, 262a; 3:44b; Idel, *Kabbalah and Eros*, 27; Vol. 4, pp. 467–68, n. 363. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 10, n. 25. In the *Zohar* the title "blessed Holy One" often refers to *Tif'eret*.

On the two demonic spirits, see above, note 96. The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *She* [Jerusalem] *lusted after their* [Egypt's] *paramours, whose flesh is the flesh of donkeys and whose emission is the emission of stallions*. See above, note 91. The full verse in Proverbs (warning against an adulteress) reads: *For the lips of an alien* [or: *foreign, strange*] *woman drip honey, and her palate is smoother than oil*.

112. **the first garment donned…** See above, note 65. On the need for sorcerers to employ a small or young animal, see above, p. 41. n. 106.

113. **since they desired *Elohim*…** The mixed multitude demanded that Aaron replace *Shekhinah* (*Elohim*) with the Golden Calf (a false *elohim*), which did contain a divine element—since it was based on the image of the bull on the left side of the heavenly Chariot. The worship of the Golden Calf constituted an insult and a threat to Holy *Elohim* (Mother, *Shekhinah*), who therefore departed and could not restrain the Divine Father's wrath. Fortunately, when God prodded Moses, he realized that it was up to him to save Israel by assuming the role of *Shekhinah*. See above, notes 56–57, 64–65, 67.

114. **Three times He prodded him…** God's declaration to Moses—*Now, leave Me be, that My wrath may blaze against them and I may consume them, and I will make you a great nation*—was actually a hint that Moses should intervene. The opening words of this verse—*Now, leave Me be*—allude to *Ḥesed*, the quality of loving-kindness and ease. Responding to this hint, Moses invoked the name of the patriarch who symbolizes this *sefirah* by saying *Remember Abraham* (Exodus 32:13); thereby he seized God's right arm, identified with *Ḥesed*. The next part of the verse—*that My wrath may blaze against them and I may consume them*—alludes to *Gevurah* or *Din* (Judgment). Responding to this, Moses invoked the name *Isaac* (ibid.), the patriarch who symbolizes this *sefirah*; thereby he seized

God's left arm, identified with *Gevurah*. The end of the verse—*and I will make you a great nation*—alludes to *Tif'eret*, or *Tif'eret Yisra'el* ("Beauty of Israel"), which includes both *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*. Responding to this, Moses invoked the name *Israel* (ibid.), the patriarch who symbolizes this *sefirah*; thereby he embraced the trunk of the divine body, identified with *Tif'eret*. (This *sefirah* is also symbolized by Moses himself.) Thus, Moses pinned God's arms and immobilized Him, saving Israel from His wrath.

The phrase "the pointed words of the King" renders מילי נקודין דמלכא (*millei nequdin de-malka*), "the words of the points of the King." These "points of the King" remind one of נקודין דשמשא (*nequdin de-shimsha*), "the points of the sun," mentioned near the beginning of this story (above at note 6). Those points were used to discover gold; here, Moses masters another set of points, which are "pointed words" or hints, alluding to various sefirotic "points of the King."

The word "prodded" (in this and in the previous paragraph, and above at note 57) renders אנקיד (*anqid*). On God prodding Moses by His declaration *Now, leave Me be*…, see above, note 57. Moses' response in Exodus 32:13 reads in full: *Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel Your servants, to whom You swore by Yourself and said to them, "I will multiply your seed like the stars of heaven, and all this land of which I spoke, I will give to your seed, and they will possess it forever."*

On Moses as "Faithful Shepherd," see *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 6; *Sifrei Zuta* 27; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 24; *Ester Rabbah* 7:13; *Rut Rabbah, Petiḥta* 5. Cf. Numbers 27:17; Philo, *De Vita Mosis* 1:60–62; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 7; *Shemot Rabbah* 2:2–3.

On the term "body of the King," see *Zohar* 1:216a, 217b, 219a, 223b; 2:82a, 85b–86a, 87a–b, 123a; 3:294b (*IZ*); Liebes, *Peraqim*, 199, 226–27. Cf. the Christian term *corpus Domini*, "body of the Lord."

115. **If we have come into the world...** Similar exclamations appear in rabbinic literature and often in the *Zohar*. See BT *Berakhot* 16a, 24b; *Shabbat* 41a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 6:2; *Qohelet Zuta* 5:17; *Zohar* 1:2a, 129b (*MhN*), 148b, 164b, 235b, 240a; 2:99a, 121b–122a; 3:26a, 121a, 203a.

116. **He wept...** Rabbi Abba dreads the day when Rabbi Shim'on will pass away and leave the world orphaned of his wisdom.

On the hiddenness of this particular "word"—namely the reason why Moses, and not *Shekhinah*, acted to restrain divine wrath—see above at notes 58, 63. On God's rejoicing in newly revealed words of Torah, see *Zohar* 1:4b.

117. **Come and see: Until Adam sinned...** He originally dwelled in wisdom and was linked to the sefirotic Tree of Life, whose trunk is *Tif'eret*. Once he began to explore the demonic realm below, he was separated from that tree.

On the nature of Adam's sin, see below, note 128. On the change in hearing the voice, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:7–8: "It was taught: Until a person sins, he inspires awe and fear; creatures are terrified of him. Once he has sinned, he himself is filled with awe and fear; he is terrified of others. The proof of this was offered by Rabbi [Yehudah the Prince], who said, 'Until Adam sinned, he could listen to the divine voice while standing upright, fearlessly. Once he sinned, when he heard the divine voice he was frightened and hid himself, as is said: *I heard Your voice*... [*and I was afraid*] (Genesis 3:10); *The man* [*and his wife*] *hid* (ibid., 8).'"

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:3; *Midrash Shemu'el* 17:4; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 68b; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:3; *Zohar* 1:36b. Here the "voice from above" apparently alludes to *Tif'eret*, who is known as Voice, while the "voice from below" apparently refers to *Shekhinah*. See Vol. 1, p. 290, nn. 1392, 1395.

This final section of *Parashat Ki Tissa* (extending below until "from that very aspect" at note 130) appears originally in *Zohar* 1:52a–53a.

118. **the slime of this serpent was eliminated…** See BT *Shabbat* 145b–146a, in the name of Rav Yosef: "When the serpent copulated with Eve, he injected her with זוהמא (*zohama*), filth [or: slime, lust]. Israel, who stood at Mount Sinai—their *zohama* ceased. Star-worshipers, who did not stand at Mount Sinai—their *zohama* did not cease."

Having been purified at Mount Sinai, the Israelites were linked to the Tree of Life and perceived its various *sefirot*, referred to here as אספקלריאן (*ispaqlaryan*), "specula [or: glasses, mirrors, lenses]," deriving from Greek *speklon*, "mirror, window-pane," and Latin *speculum*, "mirror." See the following note.

On God girding Israel with letters of the Divine Name, see *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shelaḥ*, add. 1, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "He adorned them with weapons engraved with the Ineffable Name [*YHVH*], and as long as they possessed these, no evil could touch them, neither the Angel of Death nor anything else. As soon as they sinned [with the Golden Calf], Moses said to them: *Now take off your ornaments, and I will know what I should do with you* (Exodus 33:5). At that moment, *The people heard this evil word, and they mourned*, [*and no one put on his ornaments*] (ibid., 4). What is written? *The Children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments* (ibid., 6)."

Just as Adam's sin had inflicted death upon the world, so did Israel's sin with the Golden Calf. See BT *Avodah Zarah* 5a, quoted below, p. 366, n. 306.

On the serpent's copulation with Eve, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 4:1 (per British Library MS 27031, ed. Clark); *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 21 (and Luria's nn. 7–8); *Zohar* 1:36b–37a, 52a, 54a–55a, 63b, 122b, 126a–b, 145b; 2:94a, 167b, 231a, 236b; 3:14b, 76b, 97b; *ZḤ* 8c–9b, 63c (*ShS*), 83b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*,

139; Stroumsa, *Another Seed*, 38–53. On the elimination of the evil impulse at Sinai, see above, p. 29, n. 74.

On Israel's ornaments at Sinai, see *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 33:4, 6; *Targum Shir ha-Shirim* 2:17; *Eikhah Rabbah*, *Petiḥta* 24; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4; BT *Shabbat* 88a; *Avodah Zarah* 5a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 47; *Tanḥuma*, *Shelaḥ* 13; *Shemot Rabbah* 45:2; 51:8; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 16:24; Naḥmanides on Exodus 33:6; *Zohar* 1:52b, 63b, 126b; 2:227a; Green, *Keter*, 70–71.

119. ***The Children of Israel saw the face of Moses…*** Whereas previously Israel had witnessed God's might at the Red Sea and then at the revelation on Mount Sinai, once they sinned with the Golden Calf they were afraid to approach even God's servant, Moses.

See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:3, in the name of Rabbi Abba son of Kahana: "[At Mount Sinai] seven realms of fire were devouring one another, yet Israel gazed fearlessly. Once they sinned, they could not even look at the face of the intermediary, as is written: *Aaron and all the Children of Israel saw Moses* [*and behold, the skin of his face glowed! They were afraid to come near him*]." See Deuteronomy 5:5; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:7–8; *Midrash Shemu'el* 17:4; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 68b; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:3.

"The resplendent speculum" renders אספקלריא דנהרא (*ispaqlarya de-nahara*), "the speculum [or: glass, mirror, lens] that shines," symbolizing *Tif'eret*, who is also known as Voice. See BT *Yevamot* 49b: "All the prophets gazed through an opaque glass [literally: an *ispaqlarya* that does not shine], whereas Moses our teacher gazed through a translucent glass [literally: an *ispaqlarya* that shines]."

Cf. 1 Corinthians 13:12: "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face-to-face." See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 1:14; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 33–34; Naḥmanides on Exodus 6:2; *Zohar* 1:33b, 120a, 183a; 2:23b, 129b, 221a; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:44–45, n. 242; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, index, s.v.

“speculum”; Huss, “Ḥakham Adif mi-Navi,” 109–14; idem, *Ke-Zohar ha-Raqi’a*, 17–21; and the preceding note.

The full verse in Exodus 34 actually reads: *Aaron and all the Children of Israel saw Moses, and behold, the skin of his face glowed! They were afraid to come near him*. The full verse in Exodus 14 reads: *Israel saw the great hand that YHVH had wielded against Egypt, and the people were in awe of YHVH, and they trusted in YHVH and in Moses His servant*.

The full verse in Exodus 20 reads: *All the people were seeing* הקולת (*ha-qolot*), *the thunderings* [or: *voices*], *and the flashes and* קול (*qol*), *the sound* [or: *voice*] *of, the shofar and the mountain smoking, and the people saw and trembled and they stood at a distance*. On the unique formulation *seeing the qolot*, see *Mekhilta*, *Baḥodesh* 9, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: *“All the people were seeing* הקולות (*ha-qolot*)…. They were seeing the fiery word issuing from the mouth of Power and being engraved on the tablets.” See Vol. 4, pp. 442–43, n. 276.

On the verse in Exodus 15, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3: *“This is my God and I will glorify Him*. Rabbi Eli’ezer says, ‘…A maidservant by the [Red] Sea saw what Ezekiel and all the other prophets did not see.’” See Vol. 4, p. 289, n. 324.

120. ***The Children of Israel stripped themselves…*** On their ornamental weapons, see above, note 118. Technically, the *Tent* mentioned in Exodus 33:7 is not the Dwelling, but rather a private tent where Moses could commune with God; it was also accessible to the individual Israelite worshiper.

121. **What is this verse doing next to that?…** What is the connection between Israel being *stripped of their ornaments* and Moses pitching the tent *outside the camp*? As Rabbi El’azar explains, Moses feared that *Shekhinah* (dwelling in the tent) would be defiled by the serpent.

On the connection between the two verses, see BT *Shabbat* 88a; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), 15; *Zohar* 1:52b. Cf. *Shemot Rabbah* 45:3; *Zohar* 2:236a; 3:114a–b.

122. **at first it was simply *Tent*…** See Exodus 18:7; Ibn Ezra (short and long), ad loc.; and Isaiah 33:20, quoted below by Rabbi Abba.

123. **Rabbi El'azar explained positively…** One of the meanings of the word מועד (*mo'ed*) is "festival," and many festivals begin on the full moon. Moses called *Shekhinah Tent of* מועד (*Mo'ed*), indicating that She was full and free of any demonic defect.

124. **Rabbi Abba explained negatively…** The word מועד (*mo'ed*) can also mean "appointed time." At Sinai, the serpent's slime had been eliminated from Israel, so they could have lived forever, nourished by the vivifying flow from *Shekhinah*. Tragically, however, they committed the sin of the Golden Calf, thereby tainting *Shekhinah*, who, ever since then, rations life to all inhabitants of the world.

At first, *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon) joined unceasingly with *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the sun). Now, however, their union is only intermittent.

On the gift of immortality bestowed upon Israel at Sinai, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:3: "חרות (*Ḥarut*), *Engraved, upon the tablets* (Exodus 32:16) [describing the divine writing on the tablets of stone, spelling out the Ten Commandments]. Do not read *ḥarut, engraved*, but rather חירות (*ḥeirut*), *freedom*. Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Neḥemiah, and the Rabbis: Rabbi Yehudah said, 'Freedom from the Angel of Death.' Rabbi Neḥemiah said, 'Freedom from kingdoms.' The Rabbis said, 'Freedom from suffering.'" On *ḥarut* and *ḥeirut*, see above, p. 28, n. 72. Cf. above, note 118.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Gaze upon Zion, our city of assembly; your eyes will see Jerusalem as a tranquil abode, a tent not to be packed up, whose pegs will never be pulled out, and none of whose ropes will snap*. The full verse in Job reads: *I know You will bring me to death, the house slated for all living*.

125. ***The Children of Israel stripped themselves…*** The ornaments given to Israel at Sinai protected them from

all demonic forces, including the Angel of Death. Once they had sinned by worshiping the Golden Calf, they were stripped of these ornaments and were once again vulnerable to death. See above, note 118.

During the construction and worship of the Golden Calf, Joshua was outside the camp at the foot of Mount Sinai, waiting for Moses to descend, so he was totally unaware of the sin. See Exodus 24:13; 32:17; Rashi on Exodus 24:13 and on BT *Yoma* 76a, s.v. *zeh yehoshu'a*; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Exodus 32:19; Ibn Ezra (long and short) on Exodus 24:13; 32:17; *Zohar* 2:195a.

126. **He opened, saying...** The subject is Rabbi Shim'on, who responds to Rabbi Yehudah's question. Later printed editions read here: "Rabbi Shim'on opened, saying."

The *sefirah* of *Yesod* is known as Righteous (or Righteous One), based on Proverbs 10:25: וצדיק יסוד עולם (*Ve-tsaddiq yesod olam*). Although the simple sense of the verse is *The righteous one is an everlasting foundation*, it is understood midrashically as *The righteous one is the foundation of the world*. See BT *Ḥagigah* 12b; *Bahir* 71 (102); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 34.

The phrase *loving* צדקות (*tsedaqot*), *righteousness*, may allude either to *Shekhinah*, known as צדק (*tsedeq*), "Righteousness," or (considering the plural form *tsedaqot*) to both *Shekhinah* and *Binah*.

In the biblical clause ישר יחזו (*yashar yeḥezu*), *the upright shall behold*, the noun is singular and the verb plural. Based on midrashic sources, Rabbi Shim'on understands the second half of the verse as: *They shall behold the face of the Upright One*.

See *Midrash Tehillim* 11:6; *Kallah Rabbati* 9:1; *Shir ha-Shirim Zuta* 1:15; David Kimḥi on Psalms 11:7. For various interpretations of the verse in Psalms, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 32:2; *Midrash Tehillim* 11:6; *Zohar* 1:241b; 3:15a–b; Moses de León, *Sod Eser Sefirot*, 381.

127. **according to the majority of human beings** See BT *Qiddushin* 40b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar son of Rabbi Shim'on: "The world is judged by its majority, and similarly an individual is judged by his majority [of deeds, good or bad]." So although Joshua did not sin in the incident of the Golden Calf, he was still punished along with the majority.

128. **When Adam sinned by eating from the tree…** Adam sinned by separating *Shekhinah* from the other *sefirot*—in particular, from Her partner, *Tif'eret*. Divorced from the vivifying flow of emanation, *Shekhinah* was transformed from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil into the Tree of Death. See Genesis 2:17. According to *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 5, the Tree of Knowledge is called Tree of Death because as a result of Adam and Eve's sin, death ensued.

Ever since Adam's sin, *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon) was in a defective state, until Israel stood at Mount Sinai and willingly accepted the Torah, thereby restoring *Shekhinah*'s full splendor. But then, their sin of worshiping the Golden Calf empowered the demonic serpent, who seized *Shekhinah*. In order to protect Her from any further taint by Israel's impurity and the demonic power, Moses brought the Tent of Meeting (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) outside of the camp.

Although Joshua (who had not been involved with the sin of the Calf) kept his ornament, he lost his immortality, since *Shekhinah* (who bestows life) had been tainted. He died because the majority had sinned (see the preceding note). Moses, however, was not dependent on *Shekhinah*; rather, he attained the rung of *Tif'eret* and became *Shekhinah*'s master, or husband, as indicated by his title איש האלהים (*ish ha-Elohim*), *Man, of Elohim* (Deuteronomy 33:1; Psalms 90:1), for *ish* can also mean "husband." Having mastered *Shekhinah*, Moses was invulnerable to Her. Although he too had to die—because he sinned by striking the rock to bring forth water (Numbers 20:11–12)—he died "from another aspect," by a kiss of God.

On the nature of Adam's sin, see *Zohar* 1:12b, 35b–36a, 51a–52a, 53b, 221a–b; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 231–32, 236, 404–5, n. 105; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:373–76; Vol. 1, p. 298, n. 1438. On the transformative effect of the revelation at Mount Sinai, see above, note 118. On Moses bringing the tent outside the camp, see above, note 121.

On Moses as *ish ha-Elohim*, the husband of *Shekhinah*, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana, nispaḥim, Vezot Haberakhah*, 443–44, 448 (variants); *Tanḥuma, Vezot Haberakhah* 2 (*Ets Yosef*, ad loc.); *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 129; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:5; *Zohar* 1:6b, 21b–22a, 148a, 152a–b, 192b, 236b, 239a; 2:22b, 131b, 219b–220a, 235b, 238b, 244b (*Heikh*); 3:261b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 25; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 101–2 (129); Vol. 4, p. 74, n. 17.

According to rabbinic tradition, certain virtuous heroes (including Moses, Aaron, and Miriam) died not by the power of the Angel of Death but rather by the kiss of God. See *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 34:5; BT *Bava Batra* 17a (and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *she-lo shalat*); *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 12; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:2; *Devarim Rabbah* 11:10; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 42; *Tanḥuma, Va'etḥannan* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'etḥannan* 6. The passage in *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* extends this privilege to all the righteous. See *Zohar* 1:168a; 2:124b. On *Shekhinah* as *Tent of Slated Time*, rationing the lifetime of every human being, see above, note 124.

129. **There is right above, and there is right below...** In the sefirotic realm, *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* represent respectively the right and left sides. In the demonic realm below, powers are also arrayed right and left.

Above, *Gevurah* arouses *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon) and links Her with Her partner *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the sun and the Tree of Life). From below, demonic forces seek to interrupt and block their union. *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the sanctuary in Jerusalem and the Dwelling

in the desert, is vulnerable to defilement by the demonic serpent. See above, note 121.

130. **Joshua died only through the incitement of the serpent…** See BT *Shabbat* 55b: “Four died through the incitement of the serpent, namely: Benjamin the son of Jacob, Amram the father of Moses, Jesse the father of David, and Chileab the son of David.” According to this view, these four individuals did not sin on their own but died only because of the sin of Adam and Eve, who were enticed by the serpent. Here, Rabbi Shim’on specifies Joshua, who did not participate in the sin of the Golden Calf. See *Zohar* 1:57b, where Levi is substituted for Chileab.

Joshua’s description, נער (*na’ar*), *youth* [or: *lad, servant*], suggests the chief angel Metatron—known as the *na’ar* who serves beneath *Shekhinah*, receiving Her light. Joshua displayed the qualities of Metatron, yet he also reflected the defective aspect of *Shekhinah*, symbolized by *the Tent*.

On Metatron as *na’ar*, see 3 Enoch 4:10; BT *Yevamot* 16b; *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *pasuq zeh*; Vol. 5, p. 350, n. 453. On the association between Joshua and Metatron, see *Zohar* 2:65b, 147b, 164a, 278b. The verse in Exodus 33 reads: *His attendant Joshua son of Nun, na’ar, a youth* [or: *lad, servant*], *would not depart from within the Tent*.

131. **For her sake…** For the sake of Torah.

The full verse in Joshua reads: *Let not this book of Torah depart from your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous and then you will succeed*.

The full verse in Deuteronomy reads: *To love YHVH your God, to heed His voice, and to cleave to Him, for He* [or: *that*] *is your life and the length of your days to dwell upon the soil that YHVH your God swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them*. The phrase כי הוא (*ki hu*), *for He* [or: *that*], refers either to God or to loving, heeding, and cleaving to Him. The substitution of

היא (*hi*), *she* (namely, Torah), for הוא (*hu*), *He* (or *that*), appears elsewhere, e.g., in *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 2; B, 31; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 15, *Ki Tissa* 15, *Shemini* 11; *Zohar* 1:92a, 168a, 244b; 2:62a, 86b. Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi* on the verse; BT *Qiddushin* 40a.

1. ***Moses assembled…*** The full verse reads: *Moses assembled the whole community of the Children of Israel and said to them, "These are the things that YHVH has commanded you to do."*

2. ***Saul said to the Kenites…*** The Kenites were a tribe of migratory metalsmiths who had good relations with Israel, though the nature of the *kindness* they did for Israel is uncertain. According to the verse in Samuel, King Saul gave them friendly warning before attacking the Amalekites, who generations earlier had attacked the Israelites after they came out of Egypt. See Exodus 17:8–16; and Deuteronomy 25:17–18 (quoted in the following note).

On Amalek's effect "above and below," see *Zohar* 2:65b. According to a midrashic interpretation, God's name and throne are both incomplete as long as Amalek's seed survives in the world. See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3:16; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tetse* 11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tetse* 18; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 12, 51a; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:10.

3. **He was lurking above to defile the Sanctuary…** By empowering the demonic serpent, Amalek threatened *Shekhinah*, the Divine Sanctuary.

Rabbi Ḥiyya understands the verb קרך (*qarekha*), *he encountered you*, as implying "he rendered you impure," based on the cognate noun מקרה (*miqreh*), *accident* [or: *mishap*], which in Deuteronomy refers to an involuntary emission of semen. According to the *Zohar*, such an act impregnates Na'amah, mother of demons, producing a new generation of demons. See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 26; *Bereshit Rabbah* 20:11; BT *Eruvin* 18b; *Zohar* 1:9b, 34b, 54b–55a, 102a–b; 2:231b, 3:76b.

On *qarekha* and *miqreh*, see *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tetse* 13; Rashi on Deuteronomy 25:18. The context in Deuteronomy (25:17–18) reads: *Remember what Amalek did to you on the way when you came out of Egypt, how he encountered* [or: *came upon*] *you on the way and cut down all your*

stragglers, with you exhausted and weary, and he did not fear God. The full verse in Deuteronomy 23 reads: *Should there be among you a man who becomes impure through a nocturnal mishap, he shall go outside the camp; he shall not enter the midst of the camp*.

4. ויקר אלהים (***Va-yiqqar Elohim***), ***God encountered, Balaam…*** Similarly, in the story of Balaam the verb *va-yiqqar* implies impurity. But how can this be, given that the subject of the sentence is *Elohim*? Rabbi Ḥiyya explains that Balaam had planned, by offering sacrifices, to ascend to the upper realms and then arouse demonic powers against Israel. God, however, arranged a place of defilement for him.

On *va-yiqqar* as signifying impurity, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 52:5; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 1:13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayishlaḥ* 24.

5. **If Moses had not attacked above…** Moses defended the sefirotic realm against the demonic serpent, while Joshua led the battle against Amalek. God retained enmity against the Amalekites because (according to rabbinic sources) they had mutilated some of the Israelites by cutting off the covenantal sign of circumcision (or the phallus) and throwing it mockingly toward heaven. In doing so, they had threatened to ruin the union of *Yesod* (site of the Covenant) and *Shekhinah*. In the verse from Samuel, *reckoning* alludes to *Shekhinah*, who shares the Covenant with *Yesod*.

On Amalek's violent act, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 25:18; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:64; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 3:6, 11; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tetse* 9–10; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tetse* 10, 14; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 13:3; *Zohar* 2:65b, 67a; 3:30b, 190a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 68.

On *reckoning* as referring to *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:159b–160a. The verse in Samuel reads: *I have made reckoning of what Amalek did to Israel, that he set against him on the way when he was coming up from Egypt*.

6. ***Saul said to the Kenite…*** In this verse הקני (*ha-qeni*) is a singular collective noun, referring to *the Kenites*. Here,

Rabbi Ḥiyya interprets the word as referring to a particular *Kenite*: Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, to whose descendants Saul spoke.

Although the Kenites dwelled for a time in *the City of Palms* (identified here as Jericho), they journeyed from there, eventually inhabiting the territory of Amalek. King Saul warned them to separate from Amalek, whose wickedness would endanger the virtuous Kenites. (See above, note 2.)

On Jethro as *the Kenite*, see also *Mekhilta, Amaleq* (*Yitro*) 1; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 18:1; *Sifrei*, Numbers 78; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 35; BT *Berakhot* 63b. On the virtuous being seized for the sin of others, see BT *Shabbat* 33b (Munich MS): "Rabbi Gorion (according to others, Rabbi Yosef son of Rabbi Shema'yah) said, 'When there are righteous ones in the generation, the righteous are seized for the sin of the generation. When there are no righteous in the generation, schoolchildren are seized for the sin of the generation.'"

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 33:1; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 2:6; *Kallah Rabbati* 6:4; Rashi on BT *Ta'anit* 11a, s.v. *ha-tsaddiq avad*; *Zohar* 1:67b–68a, 180a; 2:10b, 38b, 53a; 3:17b, 38a, 46b, 218a. Cf. *Mekhilta, Neziqin* 18; BT *Shabbat* 55a, *Avodah Zarah* 4a. On the death of the righteous as atonement, see Vol. 1, p. 381, n. 296.

The verse in Judges reads: *The children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up from the City of Palms with the children of Judah to the desert of Judah, which lies in the Negeb* [or: *south*] *of Arad, and they went and dwelt with the people* [Septuagint reads: *the Amalekites*]. On *the City of Palms* as Jericho, see Deuteronomy 34:3.

7. **if not for that mixed multitude...** These hordes, who joined Israel's exodus from Egypt, were responsible for initiating the sin of the Golden Calf. (See above, pp. 77–78, n. 64.) Originally, God wanted to include them with the Israelites to contribute an *offering* for the construction of

the Dwelling. Thereby both the shell (the mixed multitude) and the kernel (Israel) would participate. However, once the mixed multitude "turned to its kind," deviating to the demonic side by demanding and worshiping the Golden Calf, God decided to exclude them from participating in the construction of the Dwelling. Now the offering would be taken only from *the whole community of the Children of Israel—from yourselves*.

On the image of shell and kernel, see below, note 144. The clause "those who were to die strayed after them" refers to the Israelites who followed the example of the mixed multitude and worshiped the calf, or even desired to. See above, p. 84, n. 80; p.90, n. 97.

8. **Just as there the totality…** Just as near the end of Deuteronomy *Assemble the people* refers to all six hundred thousand male Israelites, so here in Exodus.

The verse in Deuteronomy reads: *Assemble the people, the men and the women and the little ones and your sojourner who is within your gates*….

9. ***Joshua heard…*** Since Joshua was outside the camp at the foot of the mountain, he did not know about the sin of the Golden Calf until now, whereas Moses somehow did.

In the verse from Exodus the word ברעה (*be-re'oh*), *as it shouted*, ends unusually with a ה (*he*) rather than with a ו (*vav*): ברעו (*be-re'o*). Rabbi El'azar understands this as alluding to רעה (*ra'ah*), "evil," namely the demonic Other Side, which as a result of the people's sin threatened *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the moon. Joshua, whose face resembled that of the moon and who was linked to *Shekhinah*, perceived this threat and told Moses that the demonic power was attacking *Shekhinah*.

On Joshua's location outside the camp, see above, p. 102, n. 125. On his link to *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 105, n. 130. On Joshua's face, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 140: "The face of Moses was like the face of the sun; the face of Joshua was like the face of the moon." See BT *Bava Batra* 75a.

10. **the two tablets of stone… broke…** According to rabbinic tradition, as a result of the sin of the Golden Calf the letters flew off the tablets that Moses was carrying. Deprived of this spiritual energy, the stone tablets became (or felt) so heavy that Moses dropped them. See JT *Ta'anit* 4:5, 68c; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 45; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 26, 30.

11. **at the turn of the four seasons…** As each new season begins, control passes from one ruling power to another, and the voice (or sound) of harsh Judgment momentarily prevails, arousing the Other Side. This demonic force interrupts the union of *Shekhinah* ("the voice below") and *Tif'eret* ("the voice above"), and steals the divine light.

On the dangerous transition from season to season, see Simḥah ben Samuel, *Maḥazor Vitri*, add., 15; *Sha'arei Teshuvah (Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim)*, 80; *Zohar* 2:81a; 3:15b; David Abudarham, *Sefer Abudarham, Sha'ar ha-Tequfot*, 311–12; Aptowitzer, "Issur Shetiyyat Mayim bi-Sh'at ha-Tequfah," 122–26; Ginzberg, "La-Ḥadashim Yevaqqer," 184–86. Cf. BT *Eruvin* 56a. On *ra'ah* and *re'oh*, see above, note 9.

12. **Therefore Joshua heard…** Joshua, who was linked to *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon), perceived the demonic threat to Her; whereas Moses, who was linked to *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the sun), did not. See above, note 9.

13. ***Moses assembled the whole community…*** Seeking contributions for the Dwelling only from the Israelites, not from the mixed multitude, who had initiated the sin of the Golden Calf. See above, note 7.

14. **They awoke before the night split…** In order to study at midnight, which is marked by the rooster's crow. The two Companions then recited the blessing: "Blessed are You, *YHVH* our God, King of the Universe, who gives the rooster the intelligence to distinguish between day and night." Traditionally, this blessing is recited each morning, but here it pertains to the precise moment of midnight.

On studying Torah at midnight, see BT *Berakhot* 3b: “Rabbi Shim’on the Ḥasid said, ‘There was a harp suspended above [King] David’s bed. As soon as midnight arrived, a north wind came and blew upon it, and it played by itself. He immediately arose and engaged in Torah until the break of dawn.’” See Psalms 119:62.

In the *Zohar* this legendary custom is expanded into a ritual. At midnight, God delights in the souls of the righteous in the Garden of Eden, and those who study Torah here below partake of this joy. Kabbalists are expected to rise at midnight and adorn *Shekhinah* with words of Torah in preparation for Her union with *Tif’eret*. This parallels the midnight vigil common among Christian monks from early medieval times. In *Zohar* 3:119a, Rabbi Yehudah alludes to the Christian practice: “I have seen something similar among the nations of the world.”

See JT *Berakhot* 1:1, 2d; *Sifra, Beḥuqqotai* 3:3, 111b; *Aggadat Bereshit* 23:5; BT *Sanhedrin* 102a; 2 Enoch 8:3; *Zohar* 1:10b, 72a, 77a–b, 82b, 92a–b, 136a–b, 178a, 206b–207b, 231b–232a, 242b; 2:26b, 30a, 36b, 46a, 56b–57a, 67b, 130a–b, 136a, 173b, 209a; 3:11a, 12b–13a, 21b–22b, 49b, 52b, 67b–68a, 81a, 193a; *ZḤ* 13b–c (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 3:138; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 146–50; Hellner-Eshed, *A River Flows from Eden*, 121–45.

On the rooster, see Rashi on BT *Eruvin* 53b, s.v. *maggidei ba-alatah*, according to whom the rooster’s crows mark the various divisions of the night. See *Pereq Shirah*, 2:57 (s.v. *tarnegol*): “When the blessed Holy One comes to the righteous in the Garden of Eden, all the trees of the Garden sprinkle spices before Him. Then he [the rooster] praises.”

See Naḥmanides on Job 38:36; *Zohar* 1:10b, 77b, 92b, 218b; 3:22b–23b, 52b, 171b; *ZḤ* 13c (*MhN*), 88a (*MhN, Rut*); *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

15. **Until now the blessed Holy One…** During the first half of the night, Judgment prevails and God mourns over the destruction of the Temple and Israel’s exile.

See BT *Berakhot* 59a: “When the blessed Holy One remembers His children, who are plunged in suffering among the nations of the world, He sheds two tears into the Great Sea, and His voice resounds from one end of the world to the other.... The Rabbis say, ‘He kicks the firmament.’”

See *Zohar* 1:4b, 231a; 2:9a, 18a (*MhN*), 19a–b (*MhN*); 3:132a (*IR*), 172a–b; *ZḤ* 53b, 88a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 133. The number 390 is the numerical equivalent of שמים (*shamayim*), “heaven.” See *Derekh Erets Rabbah* 2, 56a.

16. **night is divided into three aspects...** Corresponding to the three watches of the night, each lasting four hours: from 6 P.M. to 10 P.M., 10 P.M. to 2 A.M., and 2 A.M. to 6 A.M. In the winter, when darkness extends beyond twelve hours, the night borrows additional hours from the day.

On the three divisions (or watches) of the night, see BT *Berakhot* 3a–b. On the night and day borrowing hours from one another, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 26:4; *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 12, 15; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Mishpatim* 7, *Emor* 2; *Shemot Rabbah* 31:15; *Midrash Tehillim* 19:10. On the measurement of the hours of day and night, see Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 50, 131.

On the angels singing during the watches of the night, see Rashi on BT *Berakhot* 3a, s.v. *i qa-savar*; *Zohar* 1:188b–189a, 231a; 2:173a; 3:64b; *ZḤ* 5d–6a (*MhN*), 88a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 403; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 70–71 (88–89). The passage here is based on *ZḤ* 88a (*MhN, Rut*).

17. **The first camp...** These angels chant *Who shall ascend…?* because they determine whether the souls of those who sleep will be allowed to ascend to heaven. The celestial *mount of YHVH* corresponds to the Temple mount in Jerusalem, while *His holy place* corresponds to the court of Israel, where male Israelites congregated.

On sleep as providing a taste of death, see BT *Berakhot* 57b: “Sleep is one-sixtieth of death.” See *Zohar* 1:36a–b, 53b, 169b, 184b, 207a; 2:173a, 215b; 3:119a, 120b, 156b, 234b, 260a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 52–53. On the theme of “as above, so below,” see above, p. 51, n. 135.

18. **When souls depart…** During sleep, when souls seek to ascend, those who are unworthy are rejected by angels. Often, demonic forces convey false information to them through deceitful dreams. If the information is accurate, it concerns only events that are soon to unfold.

According to BT *Berakhot* 55b, angels convey prophetic dreams, while demons convey false ones. See *Zohar* 1:83a, 130a, 150b, 183a, 199b–200a; 2:130a, 264a (*Heikh*), 267a (*Heikh*); 3:25a, 156b. On the demons’ limited knowledge of the future, see Naḥmanides on Leviticus 17:7; *Zohar* 1:83a, 130a, 200a; 2:251b (*Heikh*); 3:25a.

“Ravaging bands of dazzling demons” renders חבילי טהירין (*ḥavilei tehirin*). The first word derives from חבל (*ḥevel*), “band, group,” and/or the root חבל (*ḥvl*), “to injure, destroy.” As for טהירין (*tehirin*), it derives from the Aramaic root meaning “brightness, noon.” One class of demons is named טהרי (*tiharei*), “noonday demons.”

See Psalms 91:6 and Rashi, ad loc.; *Targum*, Song of Songs 4:6; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Numbers 6:24, Deuteronomy 32:24; *Zohar* 1:125a–b, 130b, 198b, 200a, 232b (*Tos*), 237b; 2:130a, 205a, 207a. The Hebrew root טהר (*thr*), “pure,” lends this demonic name a euphemistic tone.

19. **arraying with them the place called Holy of Holies…** These righteous souls adorn the innermost heavenly palace called Holy of Holies (corresponding to the Holy of Holies in the Temple). See *Zohar* 2:258b (*Heikh*).

20. **The second camp…** These angels chant until midnight, mourning over the destruction of the Temple. Once midnight arrives, the power of harsh Judgment subsides as God enters the Garden to delight with souls of the righteous.

According to Rabbi El'azar, the wording *we also wept* means that Israel's weeping accompanied that of the angels. The angels begin by mourning over the destruction of the First Temple by the Babylonians, and they conclude by alluding to the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans, identified with the Edomites.

In the verse from Isaiah the meaning of the term אראלם (*er'ellam*) is unclear; it has sometimes been translated: "their valiant ones, their brave men," referring to the Judeans withstanding Sennacherib's onslaught. (See Isaiah 29:1–2; *ABD*, s.v. "Ariel.") In rabbinic tradition the word *er'ellam* is transformed into אראלים (*er'ellim*), meaning "angels" or a group of angels, while in medieval angelology they constitute one of ten such classes.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 56:5; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:23; BT *Ḥagigah* 5b, *Ketubbot* 104a; *Midrash Aggadah*, Exodus 33:22; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 2:7; *Zohar* 1:182a, 210a; 2:2b, 43b, 250b; *Orḥot Tsaddiqim*, 26; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:23, n. 64; 5:417, n. 117. The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Behold, the Erelim cried outside; angels of peace weep bitterly*.

21. **Then the blessed Holy One is aroused...** With his sefirotic rungs. The north side symbolizes Judgment.

On the divine mourning and kicking, see above, note 15. On the rooster crowing, see above, note 14. The verse in Jeremiah reads: *YHVH roars from on high, and from His holy habitation He utters His voice; He roars mightily over His abode*.

22. ***For we have been sold...*** This verse records part of Queen Esther's plea before King Ahasuerus. The context (Esther 7:4–7) reads: *For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated…. King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is this and where is he who dared to do this?" Esther replied, "The adversary and enemy, this evil Haman!" And Haman cringed in terror before the king and the queen.*

The king rose in his fury from the wine banquet and went into the palace garden….

Here Queen Esther symbolizes *Shekhinah*, pleading for Her exiled people before the blessed Holy One, while Haman symbolizes the demonic Other Side. The blessed Holy One finds comfort by entering the Garden. See above, p. 40, n. 103.

The full verses in Psalms read: *Lift up your heads, O gates! Rise up, eternal portals, that the King of glory may enter. Who is the King of glory? YHVH, mighty and valiant; YHVH, valiant in battle*. The first camp of angels had chanted the opening verses of this psalm. See above at note 17.

23. **As the sun moves in its sphere…** In one of the heavenly spheres, which according to ancient philosophy generate harmonious music as they move.

On the sweet sound of the heavenly spheres, see *Zohar* 1:41b (*Heikh*), 161b (*ST*), 233b (*Tos*); 2:211a; 3:165a, 209a; Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 132. Cf. BT *Yoma* 20b; *Tanḥuma, Aḥarei Mot* 9.

In BT *Berakhot* 9b, Rabbi Zeira quotes the verse in Psalm 72 to prove that one should pray at the moment of sunrise. The opening verses of Psalm 105 read in full: *Give thanks to YHVH, call upon His name; proclaim His deeds among the peoples. Sing to Him, sing praise to Him; speak of all His wonders*.

24. **If the inhabitants of the world were not so closed-minded…** If they could perceive this sound, it would overwhelm them.

On the fatal effect of heavenly sounds, cf. BT *Sanhedrin* 95b. The phrase גלגלא דשמשא (*galgela de-shimsha*), "sphere of the sun," can also mean "orb of the sun." See the preceding note.

25. **While they were engaged in Torah…** Having studied Torah from midnight, in the morning the two Companions came before their master, Rabbi Shim'on. He warned them of a demonic plague in town.

See BT *Bava Qamma* 60a–b: “Rabbi Yosef taught: ‘What is the meaning of the verse *None of you shall go out from the entrance of his house until morning* (Exodus 12:22)? Once permission has been granted to the Destroyer, he does not distinguish between righteous and wicked.’… Our Rabbis taught: ‘A plague in town? Keep your feet indoors.’ … Our Rabbis taught: ‘A plague in town? One should not walk in the middle of the road because the Angel of Death walks there, for as soon as permission has been granted him, he strides brazenly.’”

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 11; *Devarim Rabbah* 4:4; *Zohar* 1:63a, 64b, 67b–69a, 101b–102a, 107b, 108b, 113a, 182b, 197b, 204b; 2:36a, 196b–197a, 227a; 3:38b, 54a–b; *ZḤ* 77a (*MhN, Rut*), 81c (*MhN, Rut*).

The wording “he ascends and accuses him…” is based on the description of Satan’s activity in BT *Bava Batra* 16a: “He descends and leads astray, ascends and arouses wrath, obtains authorization and seizes the soul.”

26. **By *Elohim*!…** Rabbi Shim’on swears by God’s name that those who do not protect themselves die prematurely. As a human corpse is carried to the cemetery, the Angel of Death appears among the women mourners, because ever since the demonic serpent seduced Eve, he haunts women. Those men who do not avoid the women can be snatched by the Angel of Death. The wording in the last sentence (“… most of the world… pass away before their time”) contradicts the beginning of the first paragraph (“Most of the world do not die before their time”) and is apparently hyperbolic.

See BT *Berakhot* 51a, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu’a son of Levi: “Three things were told to me by the Angel of Death. ‘Do not take your shirt in the morning from your attendant and put it on. Do not let water be poured on your hands by one who has not washed his hands. Do not stand in front of women when they are returning from being in the presence of the deceased, because I go dancing in front

of them with my sword in my hand, and I have permission to harm.' If one encounters them, what is his remedy? Let him move from his place four cubits; if there is a river, let him cross it; and if there is another road, let him take it; and if there is a wall, let him stand behind it. Otherwise, let him turn his face away and say, *YHVH said to Satan, 'YHVH rebuke you, O Satan…'* (Zechariah 3:2), until they have passed by."

On the Angel of Death's dancing, see *Zohar* 3:172b. On the identification of the Angel of Death with Satan, see BT *Bava Batra* 16a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "Satan, the evil impulse, and the Angel of Death are one and the same."

On the verse in Proverbs, see BT *Ḥagigah* 4b–5a (in the context of people dying before their time); *Zohar* 1:113b, 119a; 2:249a (*Heikh*); 3:54b, 59b, 283b, 291b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 77c (*MhN, Rut*). On the clause "he ascends and accuses…," see the end of the preceding note.

27. **blowing of a shofar to conduct the deceased…** The Talmud mentions sounding the shofar in order to announce the appearance of a corpse. See BT *Megillah* 29a, *Mo'ed Qatan* 27b, *Bava Metsi'a* 59b. On sounding the shofar in order to scare off the Angel of Death or Satan, see the following note, and Scheiber, "Ha-Shofar be-Tekes ha-Qevurah."

28. ***When you enter into battle…*** Rabbi Shim'on applies this verse to the battle against the Angel of Death, who not only assails "the living for their deaths," i.e., to kill them, but also seeks "to kill others" who are accompanying the deceased. On Rosh Hashanah, Israel sounds the shofar to confound Satan (who is identified with the Angel of Death). All the more so, should they sound the shofar after someone has been slain by this angel to protect the mourners.

On confounding Satan with the shofar, see BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16a–b: "Why do we sound a plain blast and a tremolo blast while sitting and then again while standing? In order to confound Satan." See above, p. 35, n. 88.

The full verse in Proverbs, warning against the seductive *strange woman*, reads: *Her feet descend to death; her steps grasp Sheol*. In the *Zohar* this verse is sometimes applied to Lilith and her demonic realm (*Zohar* 1:161b [*ST*], 190a) and sometimes to *Shekhinah*, who is vulnerable to demonic forces (1:35b; 2:48b; 3:107b). Here, it refers to the fact that ever since Eve women are haunted by the Angel of Death. See above, note 26. On Eve bringing death upon the world, see JT *Sanhedrin* 2:3, 20b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:8; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 9 (all in the context of the funeral procession).

The full verse in Numbers reads: *When you enter into battle in your land against the foe who assails you, you shall sound a blast with the trumpets and be remembered before YHVH your God and be delivered from your enemies*.

29. ***Such is the way of an adulteress…*** See *Zohar* 3:72a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 83.

The full verse reads: *Such is the way of an adulteress: she eats and wipes her mouth, and says, "I have done no wrong."*

30. **When Israel made the calf…** Although rabbinic literature praises the Israelite women for refusing to donate their gold jewelry for the construction of the Golden Calf, here Rabbi Shim'on focuses on the threatening Angel of Death who appeared among the women.

On the women's refusal to donate their jewelry, see above, p. 84, n. 81. The verse in Exodus reads: *Moses assembled the whole community of* בני (*benei*), *the children* [or: *sons*] *of, Israel…*

31. **The Angel of Death did not withdraw…** With the erection of the Dwelling, all demonic forces were banished.

According to midrashic literature, once the Dwelling was erected, demons ceased from the world. See *Tanḥuma, Naso* 23; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 27; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 5, 21b; *Midrash Tehillim* 91:5; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:3. 9.

The full verse in Exodus 35 reads: *The men came*, הנשים על (*al ha-nashim*), *besides the women, all whose heart impelled them; they brought brooches, earrings, rings, and pendants, every ornament of gold–every man who raised an elevation offering of gold to YHVH*. Here, Rabbi Shim'on explains that the wording *The men came, besides the women*, implies that the two groups approached separately. The alternative wording—*The men brought, besides the women*—would mean simply that *the men* also donated, in addition to *the women*.

On the significance of the wording *besides the women*, see Rashi, Ibn Ezra (short and long), Naḥmanides, Friedman, and Alter, ad loc.

32. **less than seven or less than ten…** Among seven women in public, the Angel of Death is empowered to demand justice (and harm men in the vicinity). Among ten women (in public, or perhaps even indoors), he is empowered to kill men. When the Israelites brought donations for the Dwelling, the Angel of Death was present among the women, so the men approached separately. See Vital.

33. ***Come into the ark…*** Why did Noah have to enter the ark, when God could have saved him miraculously in one protected spot or somewhere in the land of Israel, where traditionally the Flood did not reach?

In Judges, Gideon asks God for a sign that He will indeed deliver Israel. Gideon places a fleece of wool on the threshing floor and asks that dew appear only on the fleece, while all the ground remain dry. God complies; then Gideon asks for the reverse: that only the fleece remain dry, while dew appear all over the ground. God performs this miracle as well.

According to a midrashic reading of the verse in Ezekiel, the Flood did not inundate the land of Israel. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 33:6; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 31:10; BT *Zevaḥim* 113a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:15; 4:1; *Pirqei de-Rabbi*

Eli'ezer 23 (and David Luria, ad loc., n. 34); *Devarim Rabbah* 3:6; Naḥmanides on Genesis 8:11. The verse in Ezekiel reads: *You are a land that is not purified* [or: *cleansed*], *not rained upon on the day of wrath*.

34. **once the Destroyer descends...** He is capable of killing anyone present. Therefore God enclosed Noah in the ark.

See above, note 25. On Noah, see *Zohar* 1:64b, 67b–69a. On Lot, see *Zohar* 1:107b, 108b. The verse in Genesis records one of the divine messengers warning Lot to escape Sodom: *Flee for your life! Don't look behind you and don't stop anywhere on the plain. Flee to the hills, lest you be swept away!*

35. **thirteen men in town died...** From the plague. See above at note 25.

36. **He repeated for them...** Moses repeated the call for donations for the Dwelling, as originally recorded in Exodus 25.

37. **All as has been said...** See above at note 7.

38. ***Who has gone up to heaven...*** Midrashic sources apply this verse both to God and to biblical heroes such as Moses and Elijah. As for the double question *What is his name, and what is his son's name?* Rabbi Shim'on states that both of these pertain to God. *Ḥokhmah* is named *YHVH*, while the name *Israel* refers not only to the people of Israel but also to *Tif'eret Yisra'el*, "Beauty of Israel," who is the son of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*.

For the earlier midrashic treatment of this verse (various elements of which appear below), see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:4; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 5, 15a–b; *Tanḥuma, Naso* 24; *Midrash Mishlei* 30:4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:11. Cf. *Zohar* 2:78b–79a. On the question *What is his son's name?* see also *Zohar* 1:154b; 2:79a; 3:191b. On the Christological parallels, see Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 144–52.

39. ***Who has gone up to heaven?...*** As established in the earlier midrashic sources (cited in the preceding note),

this question can pertain both to Moses and to Elijah. Rabbi Shim'on wonders, though, how the ethereal heavens could endure Elijah's corporeal body? He explains that just as Moses ascended Mount Sinai within the protective covering of *the cloud*, so Elijah ascended to heaven within *a whirlwind*.

On Moses and the cloud, see BT *Yoma* 4a: "Moses ascended in the cloud, was covered by the cloud, and made holy within the cloud, to receive Torah for Israel in holiness." See BT *Shabbat* 88b, *Yoma* 4b; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20, 96b–98a; *Zohar* 1:66a; 2:51b, 58a, 99a, 229a; 3:2a–b, 59a, 78b.

The full verse in Kings reads: *As they* [Elijah and Elisha] *were walking along and talking, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind to heaven*.

40. **I found a secret in the Book of Adam…** This mysterious text contains the genealogy of the entire human race. Rabbi Shim'on discovered there a description of Elijah, whose spirit descended to earth and was clothed in a human body until he ascended to heaven in the whirlwind. At this point, his body remained suspended in the whirlwind, while his spirit donned a body of light, in which Elijah entered the company of the angels. Whenever necessary, Elijah descends again, clothing himself in the body preserved in the whirlwind, in order to carry out divine missions in the world.

In Jewish tradition Elijah became associated with the Messianic age (Malachi 3:23–24), and in rabbinic literature he is described as "still existing" (BT *Bava Batra* 121b) and revealing divine secrets to righteous humans (BT *Bava Metsi'a* 59b). In Kabbalah mystical experiences are known as revelations of Elijah. See Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 19–21; *Zohar* 1:1b, 13a, 151a, 209a, 217a; 3:221a, 231a, 241b; *ZḤ* 59d; 62c (*ShS*), 63d (*ShS*), 70d (*ShS*), 73c (*ShS*). On Elijah, see also above, pp. 73–74, nn. 53–54.

Various sources allude to Elijah's heavenly or angelic status. See *Midrash Tehillim* 8:7: *"The bird of heaven* (Psalms 8:9)—this is Elijah, who flies through the world as a bird." In *Targum*, Ecclesiastes 10:20, and *Ma'yan Ḥokhmah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:60), Elijah is identified as "Master of Wings."

See BT *Berakhot* 4b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 29, and David Luria, ad loc., nn. 66–67; *Zohar* 1:46b, 151b, 209a, 245b; 3:68a–b, 88b; *ZḤ* 84c–d (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 60–63, 68–71; and Cordovero's critique of De León in *Pardes Rimmonim* 24:14.

On angels assuming a physical form when they appear on earth, see Vol. 2, p. 303, n. 323. On the Book of Adam, see above, pp. 5–6, n. 15.

41. ***And come down*—Jonah...** When he was swallowed by the fish. The description of Jonah as deriving "from the power of Elijah" alludes to the midrashic view that the son of the widow from Zarephath who was revived by Elijah (according to 1 Kings 17) was none other than Jonah. Therefore Jonah is called *son of* אמתי (*Amittai*), alluding to the statement by the widow to Elijah after her son's revival: *Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of YHVH in your mouth is* אמת (*emet*), *truth*.

Both Elijah and Jonah prayed that they might die; see 1 Kings 19:4; Jonah 4:8. On the parallels between these two biblical figures, see Liebes, "Yonah ben Amittai," 304–5. On Jonah as the son of the widow from Zarephath, see JT *Sukkah* 5:1, 55a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 98:11; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 33; *Midrash Tehillim* 26:7; *Midrash Ḥaserot vi-Yterot*, (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:299–300). None of these sources connects the name of Jonah's father, אמתי (*Amittai*), with the word אמת (*emet*) in the verse from Kings, but the Church father Jerome quotes this midrashic interpretation in the introduction to his commentary on Jonah. See Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:318, n. 9.

42. ***Who has bound the waters?* Elijah…** When he swore to King Ahab: *There will be no dew or rain these years except by my word* (1 Kings 17:1).

In a garment alludes to Elijah's mantle, by which he split the waters of the Jordan. See 2 Kings 2:8.

43. ***Who has gathered* רוח (*ruaḥ*), *the wind*…** Alluding to Elijah's act of reviving the son of the widow of Zarephath. See 1 Kings 17:17–24; above, note 41.

The verb אסף (*asaf*), *has gathered*, alludes to the miraculous healing of Naaman, the Aramean commander, by Elijah's disciple, Elisha. In the verse from 2 Kings, the same verb connotes "to withdraw, take away, deliver, heal."

44. ***Who has established…*** After stopping the rain, Elijah later restored it. See 1 Kings 18:41–46.

45. ***What is his name?…*** Elijah retains the same name, whether he dwells among the angels in heaven or appears on earth to carry out a mission.

46. **Mystery of the matter is מי (*Mi*), *Who*…** The Divine Mother, *Binah*, is known as מי (*mi*), *Who*. Rabbi Shim'on apparently understands the verse as: To *Who, heaven* (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) *has gone up. Tif'eret*, together with *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Shekhinah*, constitute a chariot for *Binah*. These four components of the Chariot are symbolized respectively by the four elements: air, water, fire, and earth.

The name *Who* implies that a seeker may inquire about *Binah*, unlike even higher realms, which are so inaccessible that they cannot even be questioned or explored. Still, one should not expect any clear or conclusive answers about the nature of *Binah*. Rather, the mystical name *Who* becomes a focus of meditation, as question turns into quest. See Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, 1:91a: "Concerning everything that cannot be grasped, its question constitutes its answer."

Already in the Midrash, *Who* appears as a divine name designating "the one to whom Israel said at the [Red] Sea, *Who is like You?* (Exodus 15:11)." See *Eikhah Rabbah* (Buber) 2:13; *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:17; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana*

16:3. On *Binah* as *Who*, see *Zohar* 1:1b–2a, 3b–4a, 29b–30a, 45b, 85b–86a, 237b; 2:105a, 126b–127a, 138a, 139b, 226a, 231b–232a; 3:185b, 204a.

47. **When a time of favor arises...** When God seeks to unify the sefirotic quartet of *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Shekhinah*, a voice issues from *Tif'eret* (*heaven*) and gathers all the lower angels (alternatively, the souls of the righteous) and all the higher angels with their camps to escort *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the *offering* and the Throne, and raise Her to unite with the triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, symbolized respectively by the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. *Tif'eret* is the Husband of *Shekhinah*, while *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* represent His two arms. He is also symbolized by Moses.

"Those venerated ones" apparently refers to the four archangels. (See the following note.) The twelve angelic camps correspond to the twelve tribes of Israel. On the twelve angels heading these camps, see *Zohar* 1:149a–b (*ST*).

The word תרומה (*terumah*), *an offering*, derives from the root רום (*rum*), "to rise," and can be rendered: "raised contribution, offering, donation, gift." In the *Zohar*, this term is often understood as "raising," or "rising," alluding to *Shekhinah*, who is raised, or rises, to unite with *Tif'eret*. See Vol. 5, p. 189, n. 12. Exodus 35:5 reads in full: *Take from yourselves an offering for* [or: *to*] *YHVH. Everyone whose heart impels him shall bring it, an offering for YHVH: gold, silver, and bronze*.

On *Matronita* as a name of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 39, n. 102. The verse in Psalms reads: *Virgins behind her, her companions, are brought to you*. Here, this verse refers to the angelic maidens of *Shekhinah*.

48. **those four supernal camps...** The four camps of the archangels Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael, which comprise in their totality all twelve camps. These issue from

the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, symbolized by the patriarchs.

For the full verse in Exodus, see the preceding note. The full verse in Numbers, celebrating God's providing Israel with water, reads: *The well dug by princes, delved by nobles of the people—with a scepter, with their staffs*. Here, it alludes to the *well* of *Shekhinah*, dug by the noble sefirotic Patriarchs. See *Zohar* 1:235a; 3:150a, 286a. On נדיב (*nadiv*), *noble*, as designating the patriarch Abraham, see BT *Sukkah* 49b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:2.

49. **יביאה (*Yevi'eha*), *shall bring it…*** The singular verb indicates that all the camps of angels shall escort *Shekhinah* together as one. The pronominal suffix *her* emphasizes that they are to bring *Shekhinah*.

The verse reads: *Everyone whose heart impels him* יביאה (*yevi'eha*), *shall bring it* [or: *her*], *an offering for YHVH*. For the full verse, see note 47.

50. **את תרומת (*Et terumat*), *An offering for…*** Grammatically, the word את (*et*) is usually an accusative particle with no clear independent sense. However, already in rabbinic times, Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that the presence of *et* in a biblical verse amplifies the apparent meaning. Here, *et* serves to include the other supernal angelic camps together with the four camps of the archangels, totaling twelve camps—which correspond to the twelve materials donated by the Israelites for the Dwelling. All twelve camps raise *Shekhinah* (the holy Throne) to Her Husband, King *Tif'eret*, so that they can "be present with Her" and share in the union.

The list of donations in Exodus 35:5–8 actually includes thirteen items. *Matoq mi-Devash* (following Vital) counts *reddened ram skins and tanned-leather skins* as one item, thereby producing the desired total of twelve. See Rashi on Exodus 25:2; *Zohar* 2:139a–b (Vol. 5, p. 283, n. 258).

The four archangels are identified with the four חיות (*ḥayyot*), "living creatures," described in the opening chapter

of Ezekiel.

On the significance of *et*, see BT *Pesaḥim* 22b, *Ḥagigah* 12a–b. The terms *violet, purple*, and *crimson* refer to dyed yarns. The color תכלת (*tekhelet*), *violet*, refers to a violet or bluish purple dye extracted from the gland of the *Murex trunculus* snail.

51. ***gold* first and then *silver*...** Gold symbolizes *Gevurah*, whereas silver symbolizes a higher *sefirah, Ḥesed*. Here, in the description of the *offering* for the Dwelling, the focus is on *Shekhinah* (who is symbolized by both *offering* and the Dwelling, and is known as "the lower Chariot"). Since She is the lowest *sefirah* and tends toward *Gevurah, gold* is mentioned before *silver*, "reckoning from below" to above. But when Scripture refers to the supernal Chariot of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, it begins from the right side (*Ḥesed*) and then proceeds to the left (*Gevurah*). See *Zohar* 2:129b.

From a kabbalistic perspective, the verse in Haggai is spoken by *Tif'eret*, who possesses and harmonizes both *silver* (*Ḥesed*) and *gold* (*Gevurah*). On this verse, see *Bahir* 34–35 (52); *Zohar* 1:217a; 2:90b, 138b. For the full verse in Exodus, see above, note 47.

52. **All those chariots...** Referring now to the twelve angelic camps that constitute a chariot for *Shekhinah*. They are impelled and inspired by *Shekhinah*, who is known as *heart*. The word *everyone* includes all the lower camps of angels beneath these twelve.

The verse in Exodus reads: *Everyone whose heart impels him shall bring it*. See above, note 47.

53. **What is *heart*?...** *Shekhinah*, who is *good-hearted* and the heart of all. The four main angelic camps (which embrace the others) issue from *Shekhinah* and share the name *heart*.

On God as (Israel's) heart, see *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 16; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:2. The full verse in Proverbs reads: *All the days of the poor are wretched, but a good-hearted person has a continuous feast*. On this verse,

see *Zohar* 1:128b, 259b. On the four angelic camps, see above, note 48.

54. ***An offering for YHVH…*** The word תרומה (*terumah*), *an offering*, derives from the root רום (*rum*), "to rise," and can be rendered: "raised contribution, offering, donation, gift." In the *Zohar*, this term is often understood as "raising," or "rising," alluding to *Shekhinah*, who is raised, or rises, to unite with *Tif'eret*, known as *YHVH*. Here, She is raised by the angels. See above, note 47.

In Ezekiel's vision of the Chariot, he describes the angelic *ḥayyot* (living creatures) in great detail, but he cannot describe precisely the throne that they are carrying nor the figure upon it and he is then overwhelmed by the radiance. See Ezekiel 1:26–28.

55. **those sixty springs…** Sixty sources issuing from the lower *sefirot*. The full verse reads: *Every wise-hearted one among you shall come and do all that YHVH has commanded*.

56. **to come gather from the treasury of life…** Apparently, from *Yesod*. For the full verse, see the preceding note.

"To shepherd" renders לאענאה (*le-a'ana'ah*), a neologism apparently based playfully on ענא (*ana*), "sheep." See above, p. 11, n. 29.

57. ***Is it not to share your bread with the hungry?…*** The full verse (describing what God truly wants) reads: *Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the wretched poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh and blood?*

A poor person represents a gift because he enables one to demonstrate virtue by helping him. See *Sefer ha-Yashar* (attributed to Rabbeinu Tam), chap. 13: "As a certain sage said, 'When the Creator wishes to send a gift to his devotees, he arranges for a poor person to appear at his gate.'" See *Zohar* 1:104a.

58. **Whoever feels compassion for the poor…** And restores his soul by providing for him.

The closing words "although we have already established this" refers to the midrashic treatment of the verse in Genesis, which reads: *Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew and all the goods they had gotten and the persons they had acquired in Haran, and they set out on the way to the land of Canaan*. The clause והנפש אשר עשו (*ve-ha-nefesh asher asu*), *and the persons they had acquired*, refers literally to the slaves that Abraham and Sarah had obtained, but the Midrash interprets it hyperliterally. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 39:14: "*Ve-ha-nefesh asher asu, And the souls they had made, in Haran*. Rabbi El'azar said in the name of Rabbi Yose son of Zimra, 'If all the nations assembled to create a single mosquito, they could not cast a soul into it, yet you say: *and the souls they had made*?! Rather, these are converts. Then the verse should read: [*and the souls*] *they had converted*. Why *they had made*? To teach you that whoever draws a Gentile near is as though he created him.' Then the verse should read: *he* [Abraham] *had made*. Why *they had made*? Rabbi Ḥunya said, 'Abraham converted the men, and Sarah the women.'"

Here Rabbi Yehudah focuses on Abraham's providing for the inhabitants of Haran, not on converting them. On the earlier midrashic interpretation, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 32; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:3; *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 12; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 12; B, 26; *Zohar* 1:78b–79b, 130a (*MhN*); 2:128b, 147b; 3:168a; *ZḤ* 25a (*MhN*).

59. **פריס פריסת (*Pereis perisat*), *Pereis*—*has been divided*…** Daniel interprets the dream of King Belshazzar of Babylon, in which a human hand appeared and wrote four words on the plaster of the wall of the royal palace: מנא מנא תקל ופרסין (*Mene mene teqel u-pharsin*) (Daniel 5:25). The last word is a dual form of פרס (*peres*), a unit of weight: one-half of a mina, or of a shekel. Daniel interprets it verbally as *perisat, has been*

divided, and apparently also as alluding to the Persians: *Peres—your kingdom perisat, has been divided, and given to the Medes* ופרס (*u-pharas*), *and the Persians*.

Here Rabbi Yehudah interprets the verb פרוס (*paros*) in Isaiah as "to break," which is, in fact, its literal meaning. One should break pieces of bread for the poor guest so that he won't be embarrassed by having to do so himself.

60. ***your bread*—what is yours...** If one gives anything stolen to the poor, it testifies against him. Similarly, no stolen property may be offered for the construction of the Dwelling.

On *Take from yourselves* as implying nothing stolen, see the midrashic treatment of *You shall take for yourselves* (Leviticus 23:40) in *Sifra, Emor* 16:2, 102c; JT *Sukkah* 3:1, 53c; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 30:6; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 27:6; BT *Sukkah* 41b; *Tanḥuma, Emor* 18; *Midrash Tehillim* 26:5. In all of these sources (except for *Sifra* and BT *Sukkah*), the stolen object (a lulav) exposes the theft to God or is compared to an advocate who becomes an accuser.

61. **Surely, *Shekhinah* is with us!** The presence of Rabbi Abba resembles the Divine Presence or is accompanied by Her. According to rabbinic tradition, "whoever welcomes [literally, receives the face of] the wise is considered as if he welcomes *Shekhinah*."

See *Mekhilta, Amaleq (Yitro)* 1. Cf. JT *Eruvin* 5:1, 22b: "Rabbi Shemu'el said in the name of Rabbi Zeira, '... Whoever welcomes his teacher is considered as if he welcomes *Shekhinah*.' .... Rabbi Yishma'el taught... 'One who welcomes his friend is considered as if he welcomes *Shekhinah*.'"

The *Zohar* sometimes transforms the rabbinic simile into an actual description of the righteous, who are called the face of *Shekhinah* "because *Shekhinah* is hidden within them: She is in concealment and they are revealed" (2:163b).

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:6; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:5; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 27; *Zohar* 1:9a, 94b; 2:5a (*MhN*), 38a, 50a, 94b, 225a; 3:6b, 148a, 298a; *ZḤ* 11c (*MhN*); Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, 370. Cf. Genesis 33:10.

62. ***Ever since I brought My people…*** Rabbi Abba wonders why the verse first mentions choosing *a city* and then switches to choosing *David*, the ruler of the city. It would make more sense to refer to choosing *Jerusalem*.

See David Kimḥi on the verse in Kings. The full verse reads: *Ever since I brought My people Israel out of Egypt, I did not choose a city among all the tribes of Israel for building a House where My name might abide; but I chose David to rule My people Israel*.

63. **a city and all its inhabitants depend upon the shepherd…** On the people being dependent on their leader, see *Zohar* 2:36b, 47a; 3:114a, 135a (*IR*). Cf. *Tosefta Ta'anit* 2:5; BT *Eruvin* 41a, *Arakhin* 17a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 42; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqat* 23; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:28; *Zohar* 3:20b.

64. **Now the blessed Holy One gazed upon the world…** In the aftermath of the destruction of the Temple, God has established Rabbi Shim'on, the Holy Lamp, as the new leader. On the unique status of Rabbi Shim'on, see above, p. 13, n. 36.

65. **However, *the God of Jacob…*** When Jacob fled from his brother, Esau, he was alone and desperate, and trusted totally in God, who responded by providing him with everything. Therefore the verse in Psalms associates *help* with *the God of Jacob*.

The full verse in Psalms reads: *Happy is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is for YHVH his God*. The verse in Genesis 32, spoken by Jacob, reads in full: *I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness You have shown Your servant, for with my staff I crossed this Jordan,*

and now I have become two camps. See *Yelammedenu* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 6:81); Rashi on this verse.

The context in Genesis 28 (20–21) reads: *Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and watch over me on this way that I am going and give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, and I return in peace to my father's house, then YHVH will be my God."*

66. **שברו (*Sivro*), *whose hope…*** The use of this rare noun (rather than its more common synonyms) alludes to a slightly different spelling: שִׁברו (*shivro*), *his breaking*.

On שֶׁבר (*shever*) and שֹׁבר or סבר (*sever*), cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 91:1, 6; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:19; *Tanḥuma, Miqqets* 5; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Miqqets* 8; *Minḥat Shai* on Zephaniah 1:12. The verse in Psalm 69 reads: *For Your sake I have endured scorn….*

67. ***Jacob saw that there was* שבר (*shever*), *breaking…*** The context (Genesis 42:1–2) reads: *Jacob saw* כי יש שבר (*ki yesh shever*), *that there were provisions* [or: *that there was grain*], *in Egypt, and Jacob said to his sons, "Why do you keep looking at one another?" He said, "Look, I have heard that there are provisions in Egypt. Go down there, and get us provisions from there that we may live and not die."*

In these verses the simple sense of *shever* is *provisions* or *grain*, but here Rabbi Abba focuses on the meaning of the root: "to break," and the cognate noun *shever*, "breaking, despair, destruction, calamity." See *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 42:1; *Zohar* 1:197b, 211b–212a.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *Moses said to God, "Look, when I come to the Children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?"* Having been raised in Pharaoh's palace and not among his own people, Moses is ignorant of God's name and fears that he will lack credibility when he comes to the Israelites. Realizing that they know God's name, he worries

that they will test him to see if *he* knows it! Their assumed question should be read as a challenge, with a tough intonation emphasizing the final word: "What's His *name*?"

Rabbi Abba's reading probably conveys the simple, startling sense of the verse. Cf. *Sekhel Tov*, which explains that the Israelite elders knew the name *YHVH*, whereas Moses did not. Of course, several chapters later, Exodus 6:3 implies that the Israelites did not know the name *YHVH: I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El Shaddai, but by My name YHVH I was not known to them*. However, many biblical scholars assign this verse to the Priestly source, whereas Exodus 3:9–15 are said to derive from the Elohist source.

Alternatively, the question מה שמו (*Mah shemo*), *What is His name?* is actually a statement: *"His name is* מה (*Mah*)," alluding to the Name יהוה (*YHVH*) spelled out completely: הא ואו יוד הא (*yod he vav he*), which is numerically equivalent to מ ה (*mem, he*), forty-five. However, this seems unlikely, partly because none of the manuscripts write the word מה with any distinguishing sign—such as מ״ה—to indicate that it alludes to a numerical value or to a divine name.

For a different reading and interpretation (supported, however, only by *Or Yaqar*, Mantua, and the standard printed editions), see *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; cf. *TZ* 70, 120a.

68. **As for you, holy ones of the Highest…** Addressing the Companions, who wander from place to place, forgoing comforts and engaging almost entirely in Torah.

See *Or Yaqar*; Scholem; *Matoq mi-Devash*. The phrase "holy ones of the Highest" appears in Daniel 7:18, referring to Israel.

69. ***Take from yourselves an offering…*** A person's heartfelt desire draws down *Shekhinah*, who is תרומה (*terumah*), *an offering*. One who welcomes Her radiance becomes linked with Her Husband, *YHVH*.

On the significance of the word *terumah*, see above, note 47. The full verse in Exodus reads: *Take from yourselves an offering for* [or: *to*] *YHVH. Everyone whose heart impels him shall bring it, an offering for YHVH: gold, silver, and bronze*.

70. ***shall bring her…*** The verse reads: *Everyone whose heart impels him* יביאה (*yevi'eha*), *shall bring it* [or: *her*], *an offering for YHVH*. See above, note 49.

The final sentence is addressed to the Companions, among whom *Shekhinah* already dwells; they can and should stimulate Her ascent to Her Husband, *YHVH*.

71. **He who has begun to raise…** Since Rabbi Abba has already begun to stimulate *Shekhinah*'s ascent by his profound words of Torah, Rabbi Ḥiyya urges him to continue. On תרומה (*terumah*), *an offering*, as "raising," see above, note 47.

72. ***YHVH spoke to the fish…*** God ordained this miracle at Creation.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:5; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 10; *Tanḥuma, Vayiqra* 8; *Zohar* 1:69b; 2:47b–48a. The passage beginning here and extending below to p. 138 at n. 90: "Happy is the share of Israel!" appears in a mostly Hebrew paraphrase as the second part of *Midrash Yonah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:102–5).

73. **Not this alone…** Similarly, all supernatural events were ordained at Creation.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:5. Cf. M *Avot* 5:6. On the stipulation with the heavens concerning Elijah, see *ZḤ* 76a (*MhN, Rut*).

The full verse in Kings, describing Elijah and Elisha, reads: *As they were walking along and talking, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind to heaven*. See above at note 39. The full verse in Exodus reads: *Moses stretched out his hand over the heavens and there was pitch dark in all the land of Egypt three days*.

74. **that water should divide between defilement and purity…** Water washes away ritual impurity. See, e.g., Leviticus 14:8–9.

75. **He stipulated with the sea…** On לאיתנו (*le-eitano*), *to its powerful flow*, and *li-tna'o*, "to its stipulation," see *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:5; *Shemot Rabbah* 21:6; *Zohar* 2:49a, 56a, 170b. Exodus 14:27 reads in full: *Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned, toward morning, to its powerful flow, with the Egyptians fleeing toward it, and YHVH tossed the Egyptians into the sea*.

On God ordaining the miracle of the earth opening its mouth, see M *Avot* 5:6. The full verse in Numbers reads: *The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them and their households and every human being that was Korah's and all the possessions*.

76. **He stipulated with the sun…** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:5. On God ordaining the attack of the stars against Sisera, see *Leqaḥ Tov*, Genesis 3:24.

77. **He stipulated with the birds…** Ravens miraculously provided Elijah with bread and meat daily after he fled from King Ahab, having sworn to him: *There will be no dew or rain these years except by my word* (1 Kings 17:1). Rabbi Abba points out that the past tense *I have commanded* refers "precisely" to God's primordial stipulation.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:5; cf. *Zohar* 2:221b. On God stipulating with the fish, see above, note 72.

78. **a woman… who would feed Elijah…** The full verse in Kings reads: *Rise, go to Zarephath of Sidon, and stay there; behold, I have commanded a widow there to sustain you*. Cf. *Zohar* 2:221b.

79. **we find an allusion…** Rabbi Abba now reads the story of Jonah as an allegory of the soul entering the world. He interprets the name יונה (*Yonah*), Jonah, as if it were based on the verbal root ינה (*ynh*), "to oppress, cheat, deceive, defraud." The soul is cheated or oppressed by being

subjugated to earthly desires and prevented from actualizing its spiritual potential.

On this allegorical reading, see Wineman, *Mystic Tales from the Zohar*, 107–25. On the soul in the body as a sailor in a ship, see Baḥya ben Asher on Genesis 2:7; Scholem. On the soul as *yonah*, which can mean both "dove" and "Jonah," see *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*); *TZ* 21, 53a. On the verse in Leviticus, see *Zohar* 3:293b (*IZ*). The full verse in Jonah reads: *YHVH cast a mighty wind upon the sea, and such a great tempest came upon the sea that the ship threatened to break up*.

80. **who pays no attention to this world…** So the sinner imagines.

The personification of the Decree of Judgment is based on the rabbinic personification of the Attribute of Judgment. See *Zohar* 1:106a.

81. ***The captain approached him…*** The full verse reads: *The captain approached him and said to him, "What are you doing sound asleep? Get up, call on your god! Perhaps the god will spare us a thought and we will not perish."*

82. **Reflect on these things…** See M *Avot* 3:1, in the name of Aqavya son of Mahalalel: "Reflect on three things and you will not come into the grip of sin. Know from where you came, and where you are going, and before whom you are destined to give account and reckoning. From where did you come? From a putrid drop. Where are you going? To a place of dust, worms, and maggots. And before whom are you destined to give account and reckoning? Before the King of kings, the blessed Holy One."

On the line "from earth you were created…," cf. Genesis 3:19: *By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread till you return to the soil, for from there were you taken, for dust you are and to dust shall you return*.

The full verse in Jonah reads: *They* [the sailors] *said to him, "Tell us, who is responsible for bringing this calamity*

upon us? What is your work? Where do you come from? What is your country, and of what people are you?"

83. ***The men rowed hard…*** The full verse reads: *The men rowed hard to regain the shore, but they could not, for the sea was growing stormier against them*.

84. **Then three appointed messengers…** On the three angels (or companies of angels), see BT *Ketubbot* 104a; *Sifrei Zuta* 6:26; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 5:48–49; *Ḥibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 257–58; *Zohar* 1:79a, 98a (*MhN*); 3:88a Cf. *Zohar* 1:13a; 3:126b.

"A reckoning of his days" refers here to a person's allotted lifetime. See *Ḥibbut ha-Qever* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:150); *Beit ha-Midrash*, 5:48–49; *Ḥibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 257–58. On the angel(s) accompanying the fetus in the womb, see *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 3; *Seder Yetsirat ha-Velad* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:153–54); *Ḥibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 254–55.

The full verse reads: *They picked Jonah up and threw him into the sea, and the sea ceased its raging*.

85. **Then proclamation is made…** The proclamation "Render honor to the image of the King!" alludes to the idea that the human being is created in God's image. See *Devarim Rabbah* 4:4; *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 19; *Midrash Tehillim* 17:8; *Zohar* 2:106b; 3:52b, 160b, 265a; *ZḤ* 41d; Moses de León, *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, 15.

The verse in Isaiah 57 reads: *He shall enter into peace; they shall rest on their couches—he who walks uprightly*. On the proclamation of this verse, see *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 34:5; *Sifrei Zuta* 6:26; JT *Sotah* 1:9, 17c; BT *Shabbat* 152b, *Ketubbot* 104a; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* B, 25; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34; *Devarim Rabbah* 11:10.

The verset *Your righteousness will march before you* alludes here to the notion that a person's righteous deeds precede him toward his heavenly reward. See BT *Sotah* 3b; *Semakhot* 2:3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 34; *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 8; *Midrash Mishlei* 14:34. The full verse reads:

Then your light will burst through like the dawn and your healing quickly sprout. Your righteousness [or: *vindicator*] *will march before you, the glory of YHVH will gather you in* [or: *will be your rear guard*].

86. **when his belly bursts…** See BT *Shabbat* 151b: "*I will spread dung upon your faces, the dung of your feasts*. Rav Huna—others say Rav Ḥaga—said, 'This refers to people who abandon words of Torah and make all their days like feasts.' Rabbi Levi said in the name of Rav Pappi in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a, 'After three days [in the grave], his belly bursts and it [i.e., its contents] falls upon his face, exclaiming to him, "Take what you put into me!"'"

See JT *Mo'ed Qatan* 3:5, 82b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 10:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:1; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 12:6.

This paragraph is an almost exact Aramaic translation of Eleazar ben Judah of Worms, *Yoreh Ḥatta'im*, § 68. Maimonides also applies the verse in Malachi to those who feast on the holidays without providing anything to the poor. See Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yom Tov* 6:18; *Zohar* 2:88b; 3:104a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 140. Cf. *Zohar* 1:10b.

The verse in Malachi reads: *I will spread dung upon your faces, the dung of your festal offerings* [or: *feasts*]. Here, Rabbi Abba (following sources such as the passage in BT *Shabbat*) interprets *the dung of your feasts* as "the excrement of your selfish feasting."

87. **a person is punished for his eyes, for his hands, and for his feet…** For looking lustfully, for sinning with his hands, and for walking or racing to commit misdeeds.

This paragraph too (see previous note) is an Aramaic translation of *Yoreh Ḥatta'im*, § 68. On the punishment of the various limbs, see also *ZḤ* 83d (*MhN, Rut*); *Ḥibbut ha-Qever* (*Beit ha-Midrash* 1:151); *Ḥibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 259.

According to various traditions, the corpse is punished by *ḥibbut ha-qever* (beating in the grave), administered by the Angel of Death or other heavenly or demonic beings. See 3 Enoch 28:10; *Ḥibbut ha-Qever* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:150–52); *Beit ha-Midrash*, 5:49; *Ḥibbut ha-Qever*, ed. Higger, 258–61; *Sefer Ḥasidim*, ed. Margaliot, par. 30; *Zohar* 1:185a, 225a; 2:141b, 151a, 211b; 3:126b–127a.

On the judgment of body and soul together, see *Zohar* 1:65b, 79a, 98a (*MhN*), 130b, 201b, 218b, 227a; 3:53a, 126b; *ZḤ* 83d (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 393; and the parable concerning the joint responsibility of body and soul in *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:1; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 4:5; BT *Sanhedrin* 91a–b.

On the soul remaining on earth, cf. BT *Shabbat* 152b–153a: "For all twelve months [after death], one's body endures and his soul ascends and descends; after twelve months, the body ceases to exist and the soul ascends and never again descends." See *Zohar* 1:225a.

On the closing image of menstrual impurity, see Leviticus 18:19; cf. Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 60 (74); idem, Sefer *ha-Mishqal*, 68.

88. **when the blessed Holy One arouses the dead…** On the voice in the graveyard, see *ZḤ* 15d (*MhN*). The verse from Jonah alludes to resurrection from the grave: *the fish… vomited Jonah onto dry land*.

The full verse in Isaiah 26 reads: *Your dead will live, my corpses will arise. Awake and shout for joy, O dwellers of the dust! For Your dew is a dew of lights, and the earth will give birth to* [or: *cast forth*] *spirits of the dead*.

The full verse in Isaiah 25 reads: *He will swallow up death forever. My Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces and remove the disgrace of His people from the whole earth—for YHVH has spoken*.

89. ***The earth* רפאים תפיל (*refa'im tappil*), *will cast forth spirits of the dead*…** Rabbi Abba interprets the word *refa'im*, *spirits of the dead*, according to the root רפא (*rf'*), "to

heal." The decomposed corpses will be resurrected—bone rejoined to bone—and the renewed bodies will rise, fully healed.

On the healing of resurrected bodies, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 95:1; BT *Pesaḥim* 68a, *Sanhedrin* 91b; *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:349–50); *Qohelet Rabbah* on 1:4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayiggash* 9; *Zohar* 1:203b; *Zohar* 3:91a. For the full verse in Isaiah, see the preceding note.

90. ***Refa'im, Spirits of the dead, they will never rise…*** Rabbi Abba explains that here too *refa'im* means *healed*, referring to the corpses of other nations, which will also be healed but not resurrected. "Happy is the share of Israel," who will be both healed and resurrected.

91. **This fish, as soon as it swallowed Jonah, died…** Rabbi Abba demonstrates this from the fact that the verse in Jonah employs the feminine form הדגה (*ha-dagah*), *the fish*—the same form that appears in Exodus, describing the fish that died in the first of the ten plagues. See *Zohar* 1:121a; 2:48a; Baḥya ben Asher on Numbers 11:5; idem, *Kad ha-Qemaḥ*, 217. Cf. BT *Nedarim* 51b; Ibn Ezra and David Kimḥi on Jonah 2:2.

Just as the fish died and was then revived and vomited out Jonah, so will the earth die and then be revived and *cast forth the healed* corpses. This interpretation accords with the reading "ארעא (*ar'a*), the earth, will awaken first," preserved in numerous manuscripts and the Cremona edition. The text accompanying *Or Yaqar* and the Mantua edition read instead "ארעא דישראל (*ar'a de-yisra'el*), the land of Israel, will awaken first"—an apparently emended version, matching the rabbinic tradition that the land of Israel will revive its dead before any other land. According to this reading, the verse in Isaiah is understood as וארץ (*Ve-erets*), *The land* [of Israel], *will cast forth the healed*. See above, note 89.

For various interpretations (all following the later reading *ar'a de-yisra'el*, "the land of Israel"), see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the rabbinic tradition about the land of Israel reviving its dead first, see *Midrash Tanna'im*, 58; *Bereshit Rabbah* 74:1; JT *Kil'ayim* 9:4, 32c; BT *Ketubbot* 111a; *Tanḥuma, Vayḥi* 3; *Zohar* 1:113a–b (*MhN*), 131a; 2:151b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 89–90.

In the standard printed editions there follows here a short passage describing seven punishments after death. This passage derives from Eleazar ben Judah of Worms, *Yoreh Ḥata'im*, §68, and appears in *Zohar* 3:126b–127a, where it fits more coherently than here. Numerous manuscripts do not include it: M5, M9, Ms24, O2, O17, R1, V4, V5, V18; though it does appear in N41, T1, V7, *Or Yaqar*, Mantua, and Cremona, and as a marginal gloss to C9. See Scholem.

92. **only so Israel would come and receive the Torah…** See BT *Shabbat* 88a, in the name of Resh Lakish: "The blessed Holy One stipulated a condition with the works of Creation, saying to them: 'If Israel accepts the Torah, you will endure. If not, I will return you to *chaos and void* (Genesis 1:2).'"

On the world being created by Torah, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:1, in the name of Rabbi Osha'ya: "*I was beside Him as* אמון (*amon*), *a nursling*… (Proverbs 8:30)…. אמון (*amon*) —אומן (*umman*), *an artisan*. Torah says, 'I was the artistic tool of the blessed Holy One.' According to the custom of the world, when a mortal king builds a palace he does not build it by his own skill but rather by the skill of an architect. And the architect does not build it out of his own knowledge, but rather has parchments and tablets [with plans and diagrams] to know how to make the rooms and doors. Similarly, the blessed Holy One gazed into Torah and created the world."

See M *Avot* 3:14; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 29; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 5; *Zohar* 1:5a, 47a, 134a–b; 2:161a; 3:35b, 152a, 178a; Wolfson, *Philo*, 1:242–45, 266–69. The full verse in Proverbs (spoken by Wisdom) reads: *I was beside him as* אמון (*amon*), *a nursling* [or: *confidant, artisan*]; *I was a daily delight, playing before Him at all times*.

On the verse in Jeremiah, see BT *Pesaḥim* 68b, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Were it not for Torah [which must be studied day and night], heaven and earth would not endure, as is said: *Were it not for My covenant with day and night, I would not have established the laws of heaven and earth*."

See *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1: "With her [namely Torah], God sealed the ocean, so that it would not inundate the world.... The world was established only upon the Torah." See M *Avot* 1:2; BT *Shabbat* 119b.

93. **Torah is length of life...** See Deuteronomy 30:20, as interpreted above, p. 105, n. 131.

On God listening to the study of Torah, see M *Avot* 3:2, in the name of Ḥanina son of Teradyon: "If two are sitting with words of Torah between them, *Shekhinah* is between them, as is said: *Then those who revere YHVH spoke with one another; and YHVH listened attentively...*"

The study of Torah renders the Angel of Death powerless. See BT *Shabbat* 30b; *Eruvin* 26a, and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *le-hoshiv yeshivah*; *Bava Metsi'a* 86a; *Makkot* 10a; *Zohar* 1:131b, 218a. On scholars being immune from the fires of Hell, see BT *Ḥagigah* 27a; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 3.

The full verse in Malachi reads: *Then those who revere YHVH spoke with one another; and YHVH listened attentively, and a book of remembrance was written in His presence concerning those who revere YHVH and contemplate His name*.

94. ***A book of remembrance...*** The book above is apparently *Ḥokhmah*, soon identified with Written Torah.

(Usually Written Torah symbolizes *Tif'eret*, while *Ḥokhmah* is symbolized by Primordial Torah.) The book below is *Shekhinah*, soon identified with Oral Torah. זכרון (*Zikkaron*), *remembrance*, alludes to זכר (*zakhar*), the divine "male," namely to *Yesod*, the divine phallus and site of the covenant of circumcision. *Yesod* gathers the entire flow of emanation from above and channels it to *Shekhinah*. The phrase *a book of remembrance* refers to the union of both these *sefirot*. Similarly, the phrase "Name of *YHVH*" refers to *Shekhinah* (known as Name) and Her partner, *Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH*).

The "name above" is *Ḥokhmah*, who names the unnamable realm of *Keter* and *Ein Sof*. He is symbolized by a primordial "upper point." The "name below" is *Shekhinah*, who includes all six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. The first of these six, *Ḥesed*, is described as *one end of heaven*, namely one extremity of *Tif'eret* (who is known as *heaven*), while the last of these six, *Yesod*, is *the other end of heaven* below. *Shekhinah* includes, or names, all of these lower *sefirot*, especially *Yesod*, who conveys the whole flow to Her. She is also known as "the point below," corresponding to *Ḥokhmah*, "upper point." But unlike *Ḥokhmah*, which is unfathomable, *Shekhinah* is a book and a name "susceptible to calculation."

The terms ספר (*sefer*), "book," and שם (*shem*), "name," both refer to *Shekhinah* (as well as to *Ḥokhmah*), and they are numerically equivalent, equal to 340.

On various divine books, see *Zohar* 1:8b; 2:56a, 70a, 126b, 136b, 137b, 246a (*Heikh*). On this passage, see *Or Yaqar*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:359–60; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

95. **This point, being situated in the middle…** *Shekhinah* is symbolized by the land of Israel, which lies in the middle of the whole world. She is joined with heavenly palaces, angels, and lower worlds, all beneath Her. Just as six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod* originate in *Ḥokhmah* ("the upper book"), so six palaces are joined to *Shekhinah* ("the lower book").

Ḥokhmah is known as תורה שבכתב (*Torah she-bi-khtav*), "Written Torah"—literally "Torah in writing," because its hiddenness is revealed only through *Binah*, who conveys or "writes" this concealed divine reality. *Binah* is also known as the World that is Coming.

Shekhinah is known as תורה שבעל פה (*Torah she-be-al peh*), "Oral Torah"—literally "Torah on (or above) the mouth," because She stands upon, or above, the angelic chariots. Since these are not included "in the writing above," namely in the sefirotic realm itself, they are called *al peh*, "Oral." These angelic chariots inhabit the world of division, which emerges from the Garden of *Shekhinah*, as implied in the verse from Genesis: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads*.

On *Binah* as the World that is Coming, see above, pp. 34–35, n. 87.

96. **Although upper Torah stands above...** *Ḥokhmah* enters the palace of *Binah*, who conveys or "writes" its hiddenness.

97. **But Torah below...** *Shekhinah* stands upon Her angelic chariots, which are not "considered (to be) within" the purely divine realm. Thus the point of *Shekhinah* is "on" and not "in" them—unlike the "supernal point" of *Ḥokhmah*, which is enclosed within the palace of *Binah*.

The angelic chariots raise *Shekhinah* to unite with Her partner, *Tif'eret*. On the significance of the term תרומה (*terumah*), see above, note 47.

98. **תרי ממאה (*terei mi-me'ah*), two out of a hundred...** M *Terumot* 4:3 specifies the size of the *terumah* (offering) that should be given to the priest: "The measure of *terumah*: one who is generous, one-fortieth. The School of Shammai says, 'One-thirtieth.' One who is average, one-fiftieth. One who is stingy, one-sixtieth." Here, playing on תרומה (*terumah*), Rabbi Ḥiyya expresses "one-fiftieth" as תרי ממאה (*terei mi-me'ah*), "two out of a hundred."

Each of the ten *sefirot* includes ten aspects, so they total one hundred. When one raises the point of *Shekhinah* through contemplation, She must be grasped with Her Husband, *Tif'eret*. Together, they are *terei mi-me'ah*, "two out of a hundred," constituting a genuine *terumah*.

According to M *Avot* 5:1, "By ten utterances, the world was created." Rabbinic sources include several different lists of these ten biblical utterances, some of which include Genesis 2:18, and some of which count the opening word of the Torah, *be-reshit, in the beginning*, as an utterance in itself. In Kabbalah the ten utterances symbolize the ten *sefirot*.

See *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 31; B, 36; *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:1; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 32a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3 (and Luria's n. 73); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 21, 108a–b (and Ish Shalom's n. 138); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 506; *Zohar* 1:15a, 16b, 30a; 2:14b (*MhN*), 34b, 67a, 75b, 156b, 169b, 178b (*SdTs*); 3:11b–12a; Duran, *Magen Avot* on 5:1.

On *terei mi-me'ah*, "two out of a hundred," see *Zohar* 3:179b (*RM*), 188b. On the significance of the term *terumah*, see above, note 47.

99. ***Take from yourselves an offering for YHVH*** This command now means "Raise *Shekhinah* (known as *terumah, an offering*) to *Tif'eret* (known as *YHVH*)." See above at notes 47, 69–70.

100. **Now, if you say that this is difficult...** How can a person possibly raise *Shekhinah*? By heartfelt devotion through prayer, one adorns *Shekhinah* and prepares Her to unite with *Tif'eret* above.

In the early part of the morning service appear *Pesuqei de-Zimra* (Verses of Song), consisting almost entirely of psalms. These praises harmonize with angelic praise chanted above. See *Zohar* 2:131a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 60.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *Take from yourselves an offering for* [or: *to*] *YHVH. Everyone whose heart impels*

him יביאה (*yevi'eha*), *shall bring it* [or: *her*], *an offering for YHVH: gold, silver, and bronze*. See above, notes 69–70.

101. **prayer recited seated...** This section of the morning service (which includes the *Shema*) precedes the central prayer, which is recited standing and known as *Amidah* (Standing). Now, *Shekhinah*'s angelic maidens are adorned.

After the *Shema* comes the prayer "True and firm," followed shortly by the blessing that immediately precedes the *Amidah*: "Blessed are You, *YHVH*, who has redeemed Israel." This blessing must be recited standing, since now *Shekhinah*'s royal partner comes to greet Her. During the first three blessings of the *Amidah*, the supernal King proceeds to embrace Her. The divine right arm, *Ḥesed*, is symbolized by Abraham, whose name concludes the first blessing: "Blessed are You, *YHVH*, Shield of Abraham." The left arm, *Gevurah*, is alluded to by the opening words of the second blessing: "You are גבור (*gibbor*), mighty." The third blessing corresponds to *Tif'eret*, the trunk of the divine body.

102. **Now that the supernal King and *Matronita*...** During the middle section of the weekday *Amidah* (consisting of thirteen blessings) the divine couple are joyously kissing, so this is an opportune time to make requests. Various specific requests are included in these middle thirteen blessings, while personal prayers may be added to the last of them, which concludes: "Blessed are You, *YHVH*, who hears prayer."

The final three blessings of the *Amidah* correspond to *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*, which symbolize respectively the divine right and left legs and the phallus. Now the divine couple unites, and one should prepare to leave them alone in their joy. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:967. On the name *Matronita*, see the Glossary.

103. **Then one must fall on his face...** Immediately following the cantor's repetition of the *Amidah*, the *Taḥanun* (Supplication) is recited, a prayer of confession of sins and

petition for grace. This prayer is also known as *nefilat appayim* (falling on the face, prostration), and originally it was recited in this position, though later it became customary to recite *Taḥanun* in a seated (or half-seated) posture with lowered head and one’s face buried in the bend of the arm.

According to Kabbalah, it is appropriate to fall on one's face or cover it during the union of the divine couple. At the same time, by praying this prayer passionately one can "surrender his soul" to *Shekhinah* ("the bundle of life") as She receives a flow of new souls from the river of *Yesod*.

On *Taḥanun* and *nefilat appayim*, see JT *Ta'anit* 2:4, 65d; *Avodah Zarah* 4:1, 43d; BT *Megillah* 22a–b, *Ta'anit* 14b; *Bava Metsi'a* 59b; *Zohar* 2:128b–129a, 202b; 3:120b–121a, 176b, 241b; *ZḤ* 42a–b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:969–71; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 474–85.

104. **mysteries of the Holy Lamp...** Secret teachings of Rabbi Shim'on. One who surrenders his soul to *Shekhinah* at this passionate moment, as She receives new souls from above, is himself renewed. He will be granted blissful communion with *Shekhinah* not only as a permanent reward in the hereafter but even, to an extent, during his lifetime.

On Rabbi Shim'on's title, "the Holy Lamp," see above, p. 68, n. 38. The phrase "souls, spirits, and soul-breaths" renders נפשין ורוחין ונשמתין (*nafshin ve-ruḥin ve-nishmatin*). On these three aspects of the soul, see above, p. 21, n. 53.

105. ***Matronita*** **must be encompassed...** *Shekhinah* must be surrounded by new souls above (flowing from *Yesod*) and by souls of human worshipers below, rising in passionate prayer. One who surrenders his soul to *Shekhinah* is called Peace, corresponding to one of the names of *Yesod*, who is called so because He unites and harmonizes *Tif'eret* with *Shekhinah*. See BT *Shabbat* 152a, where Rabbi Shim'on son of Ḥalafta refers to the phallus as "peacemaker of the home."

The verse in Judges reads: *Gideon built there an altar to YHVH*, ויקרא לו יהוה שלום (*va-yiqra lo YHVH-shalom*), *and he called it YHVH-Peace*. Here, with midrashic freedom, Rabbi Ḥiyya construes this differently: *YHVH called him Peace*.

106. **When that person departs...** He is welcomed with his sefirotic name, *Peace*.

According to rabbinic sources, thirteen rivers of balsam await the righteous in the world that is coming. Instead of

“twelve,” several manuscripts (Ms24, V18, N41) read here “thirteen.” See JT *Avodah Zarah* 3:1, 42c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 62:2; BT *Ta’anit* 25a; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1; *Zohar* 1:4b, 7a, 35a, 88a (*ST*), 176a; 2:83a–b, 87b, 127a–b, 146b, 175b, 177a (*SdTs*); 3:91a, 131a (*IR*), 181a.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: יבוא שלום (*Yavo shalom*), *He shall enter into peace; they shall rest on their couches—he who walks uprightly*. Here, Rabbi Ḥiyya construes the opening words as: *Let Peace enter!* See the end of the preceding note, and above, note 85. On the verse in Exodus, see above, note 100.

107. **Rabbi Abba raised his voice …** Following Rabbi Ḥiyya’s transmission of Rabbi Shim’on’s teachings (see above at notes 98, 104), Rabbi Abba weeps over the eventual demise of Rabbi Shim’on, the Holy Lamp. When he departs, and his light merges with the divine light above, who will spread the light of Torah? On the unique status of Rabbi Shim’on, see above, p. 13, n. 36.

108. **the blessed Holy One sent me here…** See the description of Rabbi Abba’s encounter with the Companions, above at note 61.

109. ***Get you wise and understanding* [*and knowledgeable*] *men…*** God’s command includes *understanding*, whereas Moses omits this word when he describes whom he actually *took*.

See BT *Eruvin* 100b; *Zohar* 2:72b (*RR*). Deuteronomy 1:13 reads in full: *Get you wise and understanding and knowledgeable men for your tribes, and I will set them as your heads*.

110. **Now, if you say…** Perhaps Moses could not find any *understanding* men, since this type is higher and rarer. One who is *wise* corresponds to *Shekhinah*, who is known as Lower Wisdom. One who is *understanding* corresponds to *Yesod* (called *righteous one*), who knows the mind (or *soul*) of others, specifically of *Shekhinah* (the cosmic *beast*). *Yesod rules* over *Shekhinah*, who is known as *the awe of God*.

In the verse from Exodus, the description *wise-hearted* indicates that one who is *wise* is linked with *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the heart.

On the distinction between *wise* and *understanding* see BT *Ḥagigah* 14a: "*Wise*—this is a student who imparts wisdom to his teachers.... *understanding*—this is one who understands one thing from another." Cf. *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 13; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 1:13.

On *Yesod* as *righteous one*, see above, p. 102, n. 126. On the verse in Proverbs, see *Zohar* 3:217a. On the verse in Samuel, see *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 33:1; BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 16b.

111. **There is service...** There are many forms of bodily service, in which various limbs fulfill the commandments. Then there is internal, spiritual service, especially contemplative prayer.

112. **twelve members...** The twelve external members may be the two hands, two legs, two ears, two eyes, mouth, nose, penis, and head. Cf. *Zohar* 1:241a, which refers to twelve joints: three in each arm (shoulder, elbow, and wrist) and each leg (hip, knee, and ankle).

The "internal members" may be various internal organs or (as suggested by Vital) spiritual "limbs." For various possible lists of the twelve internal members, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On twelve total bodily members (external and internal), see *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:2. Cf. *Zohar* 2:91b (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 74b–c (*ShS*).

113. **At the moment when light shines...** At dawn, the angels who rule the day are summoned to replace the nocturnal angels.

See *Zohar* 2:18b (MhN); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 210. The full verse in Genesis reads: *God made the two great lights, the great light for dominion of day and the small light for dominion of night, and the stars*.

114. **For once a person has arrayed himself...** After donning *tallit* and tefillin, one should unify his heart through

genuine prayer.

115. **Those princes standing in the atmosphere…** A genuine heartfelt word of prayer ascends to heaven, conveyed by angels, and becomes a crown on God's head.

See *Shemot Rabbah* 21:4: "Rabbi Pinḥas said in the name of Rabbi Me'ir, and Rabbi Yirmeyah said in the name of Rabbi Abba, 'When Israel prays, you do not find them all praying as one, but rather each assembly prays on its own, one after the other. When they have all finished, the angel appointed over prayers gathers all the prayers offered in all the synagogues and fashions them into crowns, which he places on the head of the blessed Holy One.'"

See *Ma'yan Ḥokhmah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:59); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20, 97a; *Midrash Tehillim* 88:2; *Tosafot, Ḥagigah* 13b, s.v. *ve-qosher*; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 495; *Zohar* 1:37b, 132a, 162a, 167b, 168b–169a; 2:58a, 128b, 146b, 186a, 202b, 209a, 245b–246a (*Heikh*); Recanati on Genesis 19:27, 26a; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 148–54; Green, *Keter*, 20–41.

116. **Holy Name of Twelve Letters…** A name of twelve letters is mentioned but not identified in BT *Qiddushin* 71a. Later it was associated with the three occurrences of *YHVH* in the priestly blessing (Numbers 6:24–26). See *Bahir* 80 (111): "…numbering three, numbering twelve." See *Zohar* 1:16a, 19b; 2:58a; 3:78a–b, 172b; *ZḤ* 62b (*ShS*); Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 92, 290, n. 32. For various interpretations of the name here, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; Vol. 1, p. 121. n. 104.

On Elijah's possession and use of the Name of Twelve Letters, see *Bahir* 81 (111); *Zohar* 1:16a. Cf. *ZḤ* 62b (*ShS*). On Elijah's ascent to heaven, see 2 Kings 2:11: *As they* [Elijah and Elisha] *were walking along and talking suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind to heaven*.

117. **To the south there is another prince…** This direction symbolizes *Ḥesed*, and the angelic prince here conveys heartfelt pleas for compassion.

The name פסגיה (*Pesagniyah*) is apparently based on the rare biblical root פסג (*psg*), whose precise meaning is uncertain and which appears verbally only once in Scripture, describing Zion in Psalms 48:14: פסגו (*Passegu*), *Pass through* [or perhaps: *scale*], *her palaces* [or: *citadels*].

118. **four crowned letters…** The letters of the name יהוה (*YHVH*).

119. **To the north there is another prince…** This direction symbolizes *Gevurah*, and the angelic prince here conveys pleas for divine power.

The name פתחיה (*Petaḥyah*) is based on the root פתח (*ptḥ*), "to open," since he opens gates of prayer.

120. **She keeps ascending…** This description apparently applies to any genuine word of prayer, which rises through all seven heavens. See above, beginning at note 114; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

The name זבוליאל (*Zevuli'el*) derives from זבול (*zevul*), "loft," the name of the fourth of the seven heavens. See *Ḥagigah* 12b: "Rabbi Yehudah said, 'There are two רקיעים (*reqi'im*), firmaments [or: expanses, heavens]….' Resh Lakish said, 'Seven, namely: וילון (*Vilon*), Curtain; רקיע (*Raqi'a*), Expanse; שחקים (*Sheḥaqim*), Heaven; זבול (*Zevul*), Loft; מעון (*Ma'on*), Dwelling; מכון (*Makhon*), Site [or: Foundation]; ערבות (*Aravot*), Clouds.'"

On the seven heavens, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 29:11; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 23:10; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 37; Pirqei *de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 18; *Zohar* 1:32b, 85b–86a; 2:10b, 30b, 56b, 165a; 3:9b, 287a. On Zevuliel, see *ZḤ* 39d.

121. **Ana'el…** The name ענאל (*Ana'el*) means "God answers." See *Midrash Tehillim* 68:10; *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 37 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:40); *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*), 149b (*ST*); *ZḤ* 38d, 90c (*MhN, Rut*).

On the twelve heavenly gates, see *Zohar* 1:92a; 2:128b; 3:170a. The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Open the gates, so that a righteous nation, keeping faith, may enter*. Here, the command *Open* is construed as being addressed to the gates.

122. **Then a prince standing to the south…** His name, עזריאל (*Azri'el*), means "God is my help." His alternate name מחניאל (*Maḥani'el*) means "God is my camp" or "Camp of God." The angelic eyes observe all that happens below.

On Azriel, see *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:247b (*Heikh*), 248b (*Heikh*), 255b (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*), 90c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 131. On Maḥniel, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 39–40 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:41–42); *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); *ZḤ* 68c (*ShS*).

The expression "filled with eyes" derives from descriptions of angels and demons. See Ezekiel 1:18; 10:12; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:29; BT *Avodah Zarah* 20b; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§ 29, 33, 40–41, 596, 873; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:3; *Zohar* 1:148b (*ST*); 2:50b, 98b; 3:126b.

123. **If that prayer is heard by human ears…** Prayer, especially the *Amidah*, should be recited silently. During this prayer, according to the *Zohar, Shekhinah* unites with *Tif'eret*, and silence befits their intimate union. Furthermore, a word of prayer joins "the upper world" (often signifying *Binah*) and this realm transcends sound.

See BT *Berakhot* 24b, 31a; *Sotah* 32b; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 26, p. 140; *Zohar* 1:209b–210a; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Margaliot, *Sha'arei Zohar*, on *Berakhot* 24b; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 60.

On the sefirotic union during *Amidah*, see above at notes 101–2. On silence pertaining to the upper world (*Binah*), see *Zohar* 1:209a, 210a; 2:81b.

124. **one who reads aloud from the Torah scroll…** When the Torah is chanted in the synagogue, only one person (either the person called up to the Torah or the

congregational Torah reader) should chant it aloud, while the person standing next to him (the other of the two people) should remain silent. The single "voice and utterance" of the Torah reader ensures that the sefirotic couple, *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah* (known respectively as Voice and Utterance), will join as one in the supernal realm of faith.

See BT *Megillah* 21a–b; Tosafot, *Megillah* 21b, s.v. *tena mah she-ein ken*; *Zohar* 2:206a; *Sha'arei Teshuvah* (*Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim*), 26; Asher ben Yeḥiel on *Megillah* 21b; Jacob ben Asher, *Arba'ah Turim, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 141; Joseph Caro, *Beit Yosef, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 141:2; Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy*, 140; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

125. ***The eyes of YHVH*... masters of eyes below...** In describing God's providential eyes, the prophet Zechariah employs a masculine verb—*These seven are the eyes of YHVH*, משוטטים (*meshotetim*), *ranging, over the whole earth* (Zechariah 4:10)—whereas Chronicles employs a feminine verb: *The eyes of YHVH* משוטטות (*meshotetot*), *are ranging, over the whole earth* (2 Chronicles 16:9). According to the *Zohar*, the two sets of angelic eyes are separate forces; the female eyes are situated below, and the male eyes above.

On *meshotetim* and *meshotetot*, see *Zohar* 1:241a–b; 2:107a; 3:130a (*IR*), 293b (*IZ*). The Hebrew noun עין (*ayin*), "eye," is always feminine in the Bible, except twice in Zechariah (this verse and 3:9).

126. **Gedaryah...** The name גדריה (*Gedaryah*) is based on the word גדר (*gader*), "fence, wall," implying that this angel prevents unworthy prayers (or demonic forces) from entering this heaven. See *Zohar* 2:255b (*Heikh*). "Three times a day" corresponds to the three daily prayers.

127. **since the day that Torah descended to earth...** According to rabbinic tradition, when the Torah was about to be revealed at Mount Sinai, ministering angels objected: *YHVH our Lord, how majestic is Your name throughout the earth! You have set Your splendor above the heavens!*—contending that God's *splendor* (His Torah) should remain

in or *above the heavens* and not be given to human beings on earth. God, however, demonstrated to the angels that Torah is intended for mortals who are vulnerable to sin and who need laws and regulations. Finally convinced that Torah is inappropriate for heavenly creatures, the angels chanted the concluding verse of this same psalm: *YHVH our Lord, how majestic is Your name throughout the earth!*—without repeating the earlier line: You have set Your splendor above the heavens.

See BT *Shabbat* 88b–89a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:11; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20, 96b–98b; 25, 128a–b; *Midrash Tehillim* 8:2; *Zohar* 2:3a.

128. **the fourth heaven...** Here the sun appears, accompanied by the angel שמשיאל (*Shamshi'el*), whose name is based on שמש (*shemesh*), "sun," or the root שמש (*shmsh*), "to attend, serve, minister." The 365 angelic camps correspond to the number of days in the solar year.

On Shamshiel, see *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 40 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:42); *Battei Midrashot*, 1:284; *Otsar Midrashim*, ed. Eisenstein, 1:261–62, 287; *Zohar* 2:248a (*Heikh*); 3:154b. On the name Gadriel, cf. the name Gedaryah, above, note 126. The name ענפיאל (*Anpi'el*) is based on ענף (*anaph*), "branch." See Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§ 241–44.

129. **Sandalphon...** A chief angel. According to BT *Ḥagigah* 13b, he "stands behind the Chariot and weaves crowns [of prayer] for his Master." See above, note 115. On Sandalphon, see Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 148–54.

The seven heavenly palaces are described in detail in the sections of *Zohar* known as *Heikhalot* (Palaces): 1:38a–45b; 2:244b–268b. These will be translated in a subsequent volume.

130. **he unites them...** The subject is apparently Sandalphon, who unites the various crowns adorning this prayer. See the preceding note. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

Shekhinah ("the name of the blessed Holy One") is crowned above by the higher *sefirot* and below by Israel's prayers. The verse from Proverbs alludes to *Yesod*, known as *righteous one*, who conveys *blessings* to *Shekhinah*. One who prays devoutly stimulates their union.

On the verse in Proverbs, see *Midrash Tehillim* 88:2; *Zohar* 1:132a, 162a; Vol. 2, pp. 404–5, nn. 692–96. On *Yesod* as *righteous one*, see above, p. 102, n. 126.

131. **until all the prayers of Israel are concluded…** See *Shemot Rabbah* 21:4 (quoted above, note 115): "When the people of Israel pray, you do not find them all praying as one, but rather each assembly prays on its own, one after the other. When they have all finished, the angel appointed over prayers gathers all the prayers offered in all the synagogues and fashions them into crowns, which he places on the head of the blessed Holy One."

Until here, Rabbi Yose has discussed words of prayer, "conveying supernal mysteries." From here on, he focuses on various commandments, which pertain both to prayer and physical action.

132. **six commandments based also on prayer…** As well as on action, by which one demonstrates his devotion. For example, by living virtuously, one shows his awe and love of God. Blessing God includes not only prayer, but also blessings before eating and on numerous other occasions. One can unify *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah* in numerous ways, not only by prayer. The priest blessed the people in the Temple during sacrificial offerings. "To surrender one's soul" refers not only to "falling on one's face" during prayer (see above, note 103), but also to the willingness to be a martyr in time of persecution.

In the following paragraphs Rabbi Yose spells out how these six commandments pertain to prayer—aside from commandments such as tzitzit and tefillin, which pertain to physical actions performed in preparation for prayer. The verse in Deuteronomy concludes: *YHVH your God*.

133. ***To be in awe…*** This pertains to the early portions of the morning service, namely the various psalms and the biblical description of the sacrifices. These psalms are associated with *Shekhinah* (known as Awe), who sings to Her beloved, *Tif'eret*. A number of these psalms include the exclamation Hallelujah.

134. ***Yishtabbaḥ*, May [Your name] be blessed…** Soon after completing the morning psalms, one reaches this prayer and focuses on *Tif'eret*, known as the blessed Holy One.

135. ***To love…*** This commandment pertains to the paragraph preceding the *Shema* and the first paragraph of the *Shema*.

The full verse in Deuteronomy 6 reads: *You shall love YHVH your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might*. In the Sephardic daily liturgy, the paragraph preceding the *Shema* begins *Ahavat olam* (Eternal love), whereas in the Ashkenazic liturgy it begins *Ahavah rabbah* (Abounding love). See BT *Berakhot* 11b; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

136. **To unify Him…** By reciting the *Shema* with heartfelt devotion, one unifies the divine couple. The final paragraph of the *Shema* mentions the Exodus, and soon afterward comes the prayer *Ezrat avoteinu* (Help of our Fathers), which describes it more fully.

On the significance of the *Shema*, see *Zohar* 1:12a, 18b; 2:43b (*Piq*), 133b–134b, 160b–162a, 216b; 3:162a, 195b, 203b–204a, 236b, 262b–263a, 264a–b, 268a; *ZḤ* 48a, 56d–58d (*QhM*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:971–74.

The full verse in Deuteronomy 5 reads: *You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and YHVH your God brought you out from there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore did YHVH command you to make the Sabbath day*. On the final paragraph of the *Shema* and the Exodus, see M *Berakhot* 1:5.

137. **For the priest to bless the people…** The priestly blessing is recited near the end of the cantor's repetition of the *Amidah*. Thereby blessings are conveyed from the higher *sefirot* to *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel), and from Her to the people of Israel. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 10, n. 25.

138. **To surrender one's soul to Him…** Immediately following the repetition of the *Amidah*, the *Taḥanun* (Supplication) is recited. This prayer is also known as *nefilat appayim* (falling on the face, prostration), and originally it was recited in this position. By praying this prayer passionately, one can "surrender his soul." See above, note 103. Psalm 25 appears as part of *Taḥanun*.

139. **These are six commandments…** Corresponding to the (approximately) six hundred commandments of the Torah. Technically, the total is 613, and Rabbi Yose explains that the additional thirteen commandments draw down the thirteen divine attributes of Compassion, which are recited as part of *Taḥanun*. These attributes are originally listed in Exodus 34:6–7: *YHVH, YHVH! A compassionate and gracious God*…. Thus, in effect, prayer is equivalent to all the commandments. See *TZ* 21, 51a.

140. **But when one reaches these places…** These specific prayers. The verse in Isaiah is the verse with which Rabbi Yose opened. See above at note 111.

141. ***Moses assembled… the Children of Israel…*** When Moses first conveyed to Israel the command to keep the Sabbath, the mixed multitude among them failed to fulfill it because they felt excluded—as indicated by the wording *between Me and the Children of Israel*. Consequently, they demanded that Aaron build them a god of their own. Tragically, many Israelites were attracted by the Golden Calf that Aaron fashioned, and they perished. Afterward, Moses assembled only *the Children of Israel* and gave the Sabbath again to them alone.

On the earlier commands regarding the Sabbath, see Exodus 16:22–30; 31:12–17. On the mixed multitude's responsibility for the sin of the Golden Calf, see above, pp. 77–78, n. 64.

The context in Exodus 35:1–3 reads: *Moses assembled the whole community of the Children of Israel and said to them, "These are the things that YHVH has commanded you to do. Six days shall work be done, and on the seventh day there shall be holiness for you, an absolute Sabbath for YHVH. Whoever does work on it shall be put to death. You shall not kindle fire in all your dwellings on the Sabbath day."*

The verse in Exodus 31 reads in full: *Between Me and the Children of Israel it is a sign forever that in six days YHVH made heaven and earth and on the seventh day He ceased and was refreshed*. The verse in Exodus 32 reads in full: *The people saw that Moses lagged in coming down from the mountain, and the people assembled against Aaron and said to him, "Rise up, make us gods that will go before us, for this man Moses who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him."*

142. **When, on the sixth day…** As Sabbath approaches, a demonic power shines from the north (the side of strict Judgment), accompanied by seventy other forces, symbolizing the seventy nations. The single star absorbs all the others and seeks to draw energy from the divine realm. It expands into a blazing pyre, which then encircles a thousand angelic potencies ("mountains") beneath *Shekhinah*.

The association of demonic powers with the approach of Sabbath appears in the midrashic treatment of Genesis 2:3: *God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, for on it He ceased from all His work that God had created* לעשות (*la-'asot*), *to make*. See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 17: "It is not written here: [*He ceased from all His work*] *that* [*God*] *had created and made*, but rather [*that God had created*] *to*

make, for the Sabbath came first and their work [i.e., *all His work* of Creation] was not completed. Rabbi Benaya said, 'This refers to the demons, for He created their souls, and as He was creating their bodies, the Sabbath day was hallowed. He left them, and they remained soul without body.'"

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 7:5; 11:9; *Zohar* 1:14a, 47b–48a, 178a; 2:155b, 178b (*SdTs*); 3:142b (*IR*); *ZḤ* 32d–33a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 397; and M *Avot* 5:6: "Ten things were created on Friday eve at twilight: …Some say, 'Also the demons.'"

On one star absorbing others, see *Zohar* 1:119a; 2:7b. On the image of "a thousand mountains," see Psalms 50:10. On their association with *Shekhinah*, see Vol. 3, p. 341, n. 219. On this whole passage, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:490–92.

143. **This flaming pyre…** The expanded demonic force attracts other demonic powers, or colors. It then displaces them, one by one, seeking to approach the "hidden point" of *Shekhinah* to absorb Her light.

144. ***I looked, and here, a stormy wind…*** The full verse reads: *I looked, and here, a stormy wind coming from the north, a great cloud and flashing fire, and a radiance surrounding it; and from within it, like the color of amber, from within the fire*. In Kabbalah the first four elements mentioned by Ezekiel (*stormy wind, great cloud, flashing fire, radiance*) represent four demonic shells surrounding the kernel of holiness—which is identified with *amber*.

According to Rabbi Yitsḥak, Ezekiel's vision matches the arrangement of the shells on the eve of Sabbath, when the outermost shell (a *stormy wind*) draws near *Shekhinah*. This *stormy wind* is identified with the star. Beneath it are *a great cloud* (the color white) and *flashing fire* (the color green). See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:491.

On Ezekiel's vision and the shells, see *Zohar* 2:81b–82a; *ZḤ* 38a–d; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 59–60;

Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:463–64, 509. On shell and kernel, see also *Zohar* 1:19b–20a (Vol. 1, p. 151, n. 341); 2:131a, 140b, 147b, 213a, 233b.

On the *stormy wind* coming to conquer the world before Nebuchadnezzar, see BT *Ḥagigah* 13b in the name of Rav; *ZḤ* 38a.

The verse in Kings reads: *Behold, YHVH was passing by, and a great, mighty wind splitting mountains and smashing rocks before YHVH….* See *ZḤ* 38a.

145. ***Coming from the north…*** The *stormy wind* comes from this direction, which is associated with harsh Judgment. The *sefirah* of *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment), is symbolized by gold, and the demonic shells represent the dross of gold. The demonic force normally inhabits desolation, but when it succeeds in seducing people to sin, it dominates the inhabited world as well.

The verse in Jeremiah reads: *From the north evil will be let loose on all the inhabitants of the land*. See *Bahir* 109 (162).

"Dross" renders the Zoharic neologism סוספיתא (*suspita*), apparently based on Aramaic כוספא (*kuspa*), "pomace, husk, residue." See *Zohar* 1:30a, 71b, 118b, 179b, 228a; 2:24b, 224b, 236b; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 182; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 389, n. 54; idem, *Alchemy and Kabbalah*, 38–40; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 336–38. On demonic forces inhabiting desolate regions, see above, p. 32, n. 82.

The verse in Lamentations reads: *He has withdrawn His right hand in the face of the enemy* [thereby enabling them to defeat Israel]. See *Mekhilta, Shirta* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:6; *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 24; 2:6; *Tanḥuma, Beshallaḥ* 15; *Zohar* 2:143b.

146. ***A great cloud…*** Rabbi Yitsḥak contrasts this demonic cloud with the holy cloud protecting Israel. The latter cloud (which may be associated with *Ḥesed* or *Shekhinah*) includes all the sefirotic lights, whereas the dark cloud seen by Ezekiel blocks the lights.

The full verse in Numbers 10 reads: *The cloud of YHVH was over them by day as they journeyed on from the camp*.

147. **why is it called great…** When, compared with holy powers, this demonic shell is certainly small.

148. ***And a radiance surrounding it…*** Although various demonic shells exist within, the thin shell known as *radiance* touches the holy kernel and conveys vitality to the demonic realm. Because of this link, the Other Side should not be disdained. In fulfilling various *mitsvot*, one must provide it with a share, thereby ensuring that the demonic force will be occupied, assuaged, and deterred from interfering in the realm of holiness.

On the thin shell known as נגה (*nogah*), "radiance," see *Zohar* 2:69a, 81b, 140b, 216a; *ZḤ* 38a–b; Moses de León, *Peirush ha-Merkavah*, 59–60; *TZ* 18, 36a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:463–64, 509. On appreciating the positive aspect of evil, cf. the parable of the harlot in *Zohar* 2:163a. On providing the Other Side with a share, see above, pp. 16–17, n. 44; pp. 37–38, n. 97.

149. **Rav Hamnuna Sava said…** He construed the phrase in Ezekiel differently, as a rhetorical question: Is there *a radiance surrounding* the demonic Other Side? Obviously not, and so one should treat it with disdain. The *radiance* adheres to the holy kernel and does not extend outside to the other shells.

The verse in Ezekiel continues: *and from within it, like the color of amber*—meaning, *from within* the radiance there appears the holy kernel, described as חשמל (*ḥashmal*), *amber*. Here, Rav Hamnuna interprets this word as an abbreviation, based on BT *Ḥagigah* 13a–b: "What is חשמל (*ḥashmal*)? Rav Yehudah said, 'חיות אש ממללות (*ḥayyot esh memallelot*), Fiery beings speaking.'"

In Ezekiel's vision the four *ḥayyot*, (angelic) "living beings," carry the divine chariot-throne. The biblical context (1:4–5) reads: *I looked, and here, a stormy wind coming from the north, a great cloud and flashing fire, and*

a radiance surrounding it; and from within it, like the color of ḥashmal, amber, from within the fire. And from within it, an image of four ḥayyot, living beings, and this was their appearance: they had the image of a human.

The precise meaning of the term *ḥashmal* is unclear, but the context in Ezekiel indicates a bright substance. It has been rendered *amber, gleaming amber, glowing metal*. In postbiblical literature it was regarded as endowed with holy and dangerous properties. See BT *Ḥagigah* 13a.

On Rav Hamnuna Sava (the Elder), see above, p. 71, n. 48. On the passage from *Ḥagigah*, see *Zohar* 2:81b.

150. **But from the Holy Lamp...** Rabbi Shim'on (known as the Holy Lamp) interpreted the word חשמל (*ḥashmal*) as referring to the positive aspect of the *radiance*. When the demonic foreskin settles on *Yesod* (the divine phallus, symbolized by the covenant of circumcision), then *Shekhinah* (known as Sanctuary) is prevented from conveying *Yesod*'s mysterious energy. However, the *radiance* removes the foreskin and thereby earns the name *ḥashmal*, now understood as the compound word חש (*ḥash*), "quickly," and מל (*mal*), "circumcised"—referring respectively to the speed of revelation and to the removal of the obstructing foreskin.

On Rabbi Shim'on's title, "the Holy Lamp," see above, p. 68, n. 38. The context in Joshua concerns the circumcising of the male Israelites who had been born after the Exodus during the desert wanderings.

151. **There is another mystery ...** Namely, that the light of the thin demonic shell *radiance* is seen and unseen, and when the holy *ḥashmal* appears, the demonic light disappears. Rabbi Yitsḥak notes that both the preceding interpretation and this one are fine, but the former fits the verse better.

152. **With this *radiance*, he seduces the Woman...** By means of the thin shell *radiance* (which separates the holy kernel from the other demonic shells), the Other Side attempts to seduce *Shekhinah* in order to obtain Her light.

The blessed Holy One had placed this light "facing the Covenant"—that is, between *Yesod* (known as Covenant) and *Shekhinah*, or "facing *Shekhinah*" (who shares the name Covenant with *Yesod*).

The full verse in Proverbs (warning against an adulteress) reads: *For the lips of an alien* [or: *foreign, strange*] *woman drip honey, and her palate is smoother than oil*. Here, the *alien woman* symbolizes the Other Side, who attempts to seduce *Shekhinah*.

153. **On the sixth day, as evening approaches…** As Sabbath approaches, the demonic pyre (drawing on potent colors) seeks to penetrate the holy realm. When Israel greets the Sabbath fittingly with a festive meal, a flame strikes the demonic pyre, and both of these fiery elements are then hidden away for the entire Sabbath.

On the pyre, see above, note 142. On the interaction between the pyre and the colors, see above, note 143. On the flame attacking demons, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 7. On the demonic forces being hidden away on Sabbath, see *Zohar* 1:48a; cf. 2:135b.

154. **That flame is from the right side…** Symbolizing *Ḥesed*. As Sabbath departs, Israel recites *Havdalah*, which includes the blessing "… who creates the lights of fire." Rabbi Yitsḥak explains that this blessing stimulates the holy flame to dominate the demonic fire throughout the first night of the new week.

155. **As soon as Sabbath enters…** The tranquility of Sabbath extends even to Hell, where the wicked are allowed to rest. Israel is forbidden to *kindle fire* on this holy day in order not to arouse the demonic realm.

According to *Bereshit Rabbah* 11:5, one of the dwellers in Hell reports: "Whoever does not observe the Sabbath willingly in your world observes it here against his will…. All week long we are punished and on the Sabbath we are allowed to rest."

See BT *Sanhedrin* 65b; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 33; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23, 120a; *Zohar* 1:14b, 17b, 41a (*Heikh*), 48a, 62b, 197b, 237b; 2:31b, 88b, 100a, 130a, 136a, 150b–151a, 207a; 3:94b, 288b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 17a–b (*MhN*), 79b (*MhN*).

On the danger of kindling fire on Sabbath, see *Zohar* 2:89b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 358.

156. **Why the fire of the altar?...** If kindling fire on Sabbath is so dangerous, why was fire kept burning in the Temple throughout the Sabbath? Rabbi Yitsḥak eventually addresses this question (at least in passing; see below at note 229), but now he focuses on the holiness of this holy day. The angelic camps are called to prepare for the spirit of Sabbath, which issues from the south (symbolizing *Ḥesed*).

Those who welcome Sabbath joyously with festive meals are rewarded by having their tables arranged simultaneously above in a heavenly palace. See *Zohar* 2:252b (*Heikh*).

On the contrast between *fire in all your dwellings* and the fire in the Temple, see *Mekhilta, Shabbeta (Vayaqhel)* 1; BT *Shabbat* 20a; *Zohar* 2:89b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 358.

157. **the Holy People must wash themselves...** Cleansing themselves of the weekday spirit, associated with the demonic realm, and preparing themselves for the additional holy spirit that arrives with Sabbath.

On washing one's hands, feet, and face on the eve of Sabbath, see BT *Shabbat* 25b. Here, Rabbi Yitsḥak may be referring to a full immersion. See *Zohar* 2:136b.

158. **All those six days the matter persists...** Throughout the week, all six weekdays are linked with the sacred point of *Shekhinah*. These weekdays are influenced by two sets of powers, both described as "days": demonic powers of the Other Side, and holy powers of the chief angel Metatron, within the circle of holiness.

On this passage, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1290–95. On *Shekhinah* as a point, see above, note 94;

Zohar 1:6a; 2:222b, 242b; 3:250a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 110; Joseph Gikatilla, cited in Elijah de Vidas, *Reshit Ḥokhmah, Sha'ar ha-Qedushah*, 2. On the image of a circle in relation to Sabbath, see *Zohar* 1:5b.

159. **Holy Israel...** They are joined throughout the week with "those six days within," namely with the holy powers of Metatron, which are, in turn, joined with the point of *Shekhinah*, who protects them from demonic forces. During the week, this point of *Shekhinah* is concealed, not fully united with the higher *sefirot*; as Sabbath begins, She ascends to unite with Her Husband, with all the lower angelic powers hidden within Her.

The phrase "all those who engage in holiness..." may refer to those among Israel who are especially devout or to angels.

160. **There are days...** The weekdays of the Gentiles "stand outside," regulated by demonic forces. Conversely, the weekdays of Israel are controlled by Metatron and his forces, who are nourished by *Shekhinah*. These days are known as "days of שבת (*Shabbat*)," which in rabbinic usage means "days of the week," but here means also "days imbued with holiness."

161. **When this point ascends...** As Sabbath begins and the point of *Shekhinah* ascends, the powers of holiness are hidden within *Shekhinah*, while the demonic powers are hidden away in the hollow of the great abyss.

The root meaning of the word שבת (*shabbat*) is "to cease, rest." Rabbi Yitsḥak acknowledges that this sense is more than adequate, but he offers a more profound meaning. As the point of *Shekhinah* ascends, She is crowned by the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the three patriarchs) and unites with them. The word שבת (*shabbat*) signifies this union, since the three upright prongs of the letter ש symbolize the three patriarchs, while the remaining two letters spell the word בת (*bat*), "daughter," referring to *Shekhinah*, who is the only daughter of *Ḥokhmah*

and *Binah*. She delights in the three sefirotic Patriarchs, and they (all three or all four of them) delight in their mother, *Binah*, known as the World that is Coming.

On "the hollow of the great abyss," see above at notes 153–54. On the sefirotic significance of the letter *shin*, see *Zohar* 1:2b, 224a; 2:54a, 143b; *ZḤ* 60c–d (*MhN, ShS*). On *Binah* as the World that is Coming, see above, pp. 34–35, n. 87.

162. **The Great *Shabbat*...** Granted that the term שבת (*shabbat*) can refer to the union of the three patriarchs with *Shekhinah*, who is בת (*bat*), "a daughter." But why, then, is *Binah* referred to as the Great *Shabbat*, when She is the Divine Mother and not a daughter? Rabbi Yitsḥak explains that the term *bat* refers not only to "daughter," but also—in the phrase בת עין (*bat ayin*), literally "daughter of the eye"—to the "pupil" or essential point of the eye. *Binah* (the World that is Coming) constitutes a palace for the supernal point (*Ḥokhmah*), and when She carries the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret* toward this supernal point, She shares in the name *Shabbat*, which alludes now to three sefirotic aspects of the letter *shin* and to *bat*, the "pupil" or essential point (*Ḥokhmah*), all of whom are united through *Binah*. Similarly (as explained above), "the lower point" (*Shekhinah*), when joined with the sefirotic Patriarchs, is called *Shabbat*.

163. **This lower point ascends...** As *Shekhinah* ascends on Sabbath eve to unite with Her Husband, bliss spreads throughout all worlds, all demonic forces flee, and an additional soul is granted to everyone among Israel.

The image of an additional soul derives from BT *Beitsah* 16a, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish: "On Sabbath eve the blessed Holy One imparts an additional soul to a human being. When Sabbath departs it is taken from him, as is said: שבת וינפש (*shavat va-yinnafash*), *He ceased and was refreshed* (Exodus 31:17)—once *shavat*, it [the Sabbath] has *ceased*, ווי אבדה נפש (*vai avedah nefesh*), 'Woe, the soul is lost!'"

See *Zohar* 1:48a, 81b (*ST*); 2:88b, 98a, 135b, 136b, 256a (*Heikh*); 3:95a, 173a, 288b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 17a (*MhN*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1230–33; Ginsburg, *The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah*, 121–36. The verse in Exodus reads in full: *Between Me and the Children of Israel it is a sign forever that in six days YHVH made heaven and earth and on the seventh day He ceased* ויִנָּפַשׁ (*va-yinnafash*), *and was refreshed* [or: *caught His breath*].

164. **That spirit descending…** As the additional soul descends, it is accompanied by angelic forces, then bathed and perfumed in the Garden of Eden.

165. **This spirit is an extension…** The additional soul of Sabbath issues from *Shekhinah*.

Grammatically, the word אֵת (*et*) is usually an accusative particle with no clear independent sense. However, already in rabbinic times, Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that the presence of *et* in a biblical verse amplifies the apparent meaning. Here, the wording *et ha-shabbat* includes the additional Sabbath soul.

On the significance of *et*, see BT *Pesaḥim* 22b, *Ḥagigah* 12a–b. On the significance of the wording *et ha-shabbat*, see Eleazar ben Judah of Worms, *Peirushei Siddur ha-Tefillah*, 2:473–44, par. 83; cf. *Zohar* 1:5b; 2:92b; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 20:8, n. 212.

A number of witnesses (including O2, O17, and R1) quote the verset from Isaiah as: *all who keep the Sabbath*, מחללו (*me-ḥallelo*), *not profaning it*. On the possible significance of this last word, see *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*; cf. *Zohar* 1:6a.

166. **This spirit partakes…** The additional soul enjoys each of the three Sabbath meals, which correspond respectively to three configurations of the *sefirot*: the Holy Ancient One, the Short-Tempered One, and *Shekhinah*.

Keter is known as the Holy Ancient One. This sublime realm is characterized by pure compassion and is described as אריך אנפין (*arikh anpin*), “long-suffering, slow to anger” (an

expression deriving from Exodus 34:6). The configuration of *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* through *Yesod* (whose core is *Tif'eret*) is characterized by a tension between opposites: right and left, loving-kindness and judgment. Relative to the highest realm, this configuration is described as זעיר אנפין (*ze'eir anpin*), "short-tempered" (deriving from Proverbs 14:17).

On the three Sabbath meals, see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 4; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:25; BT *Shabbat* 117b–118b; *Zohar* 2:88a–b; 3:94b–95a; 288b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 48c; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1234–36. On various correspondences between the meals and the *sefirot*, see *Zohar* 2:88a–b; 3:288b; *ZḤ* 48c; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 16:25; idem, *Shulḥan shel Arba, Kitvei Rabbeinu Baḥya*, 482; Isaiah Horowitz, *Shenei Luḥot ha-Berit, Massekhet Shabbat*, 102a–b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1234–35.

167. **All six days...** During the weekdays, the additional Sabbath soul inhabits the upper world and delights in the spirit of the Holy Ancient One. As Sabbath approaches, it descends and bathes in the Garden of Eden, thereby preparing itself to enter the physical realm, where it shares in the delight of the Sabbath meals. Thus the spirit is "crowned above (in the divine realm) and below (by the Sabbath meals)."

168. **This spirit is an extension...** Of *Shekhinah*. When She receives the flow of blessing from the higher *sefirot*, She conveys its radiance to the additional spirit, half of whose light is reflected back to *Shekhinah* above and half of whose light illumines Israel below. According to Rabbi Yitsḥak, the verse in Exodus is uttered by *Shekhinah*, who describes how She and *the Children of Israel* share the inheritance of this spirit. While the upper portion of the spirit delights in divine splendor, the lower portion partakes of the Sabbath meals.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *Between Me and the Children of Israel it is a sign forever that in six days YHVH*

made heaven and earth and on the seventh day He ceased and was refreshed.

169. **When this portion below…** If the additional soul is adorned by Israel through their observing and celebrating the Sabbath, it ascends and unites with the portion of the soul that remained above illumining *Shekhinah*. Thus *Shekhinah* is fully energized and capable of nourishing all the days of the week.

The Book of King Solomon is one of the many volumes housed in the real or imaginary library of the authors of the *Zohar*. For other references to this book, see *Zohar* 1:7b, 13b, 225b; 2:67a, 70a (*RR*), 125a, 139a, 172a; 3:10b, 65b, 70b, 104a, 151b, 164a, 193b; *ZḤ* 12b (*MhN*). Naḥmanides several times refers to, and quotes from, an Aramaic version of the Apocryphal *Wisdom of Solomon*. See the introduction to his Commentary on the Torah, 5–6; idem, *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:163, 182; Marx, "An Aramaic Fragment of the Wisdom of Solomon." On the numerous scientific and magical books attributed to King Solomon, see *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:956–57.

See Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, 25; and the comment by Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, on *Zohar* 1:7a: "All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*… have been lost in the wanderings of exile…. Nothing is left of them except what is mentioned in the *Zohar*." For a catalogue of these books, see Neuhausen, *Sifriyyah shel Ma'lah*.

On Rabbi Shim'on's title, "the Holy Lamp," see above, p. 68, n. 38.

170. **וינפש (*Va-yinnafash*), *and He was refreshed…*** Rabbi Yitsḥak refers to a midrashic interpretation in BT *Beitsah* 16a (quoted above, note 163): "On Sabbath eve the blessed Holy One imparts an additional soul to a human being. When Sabbath departs it is taken from him, as is said: שבת וינפש (*shavat va-yinnafash*), *He ceased and was refreshed*—once *shavat*, it [the Sabbath] has *ceased*, אבדה נפש ווי (*vai avedah nefesh*), 'Woe, the soul is lost!'"

Rabbi Yitsḥak paraphrases the midrashic reading of ויִנָּפַשׁ (*va-yinnafash*), *and He was refreshed*, as וַי נֶפֶשׁ (*vai nefesh*), "Woe for the soul, that is lost!" He wonders why the soul would be woeful when Sabbath departs, and not the body, which has just lost the additional soul. He explains that here "soul" refers not to the additional soul, but rather to one's normal soul, which receives the additional spirit (or soul) each Sabbath. When Sabbath departs, *vai nefesh*, "Woe for the (normal) soul," which has now lost the additional spirit.

For the full verse in Exodus, and on the teaching in *Beitsah*, see above, note 163.

171. **conjugal duty of the wise...** The eve (that is, the night) of Sabbath is the appropriate time for scholars to unite with their wives.

The Mishnah (*Ketubbot* 5:6) discusses how often husbands of various professions are required to fulfill the commandment of עוֹנָה (*onah*), "conjugal rights," i.e., to satisfy their wives sexually. According to Rabbi Eli'ezer, "The *onah* mentioned in the Torah [applies as follows]: Those who are unoccupied, every day; laborers, twice a week; donkey-drivers, once a week; camel-drivers, once every thirty days; sailors, once every six months."

The Talmud (BT *Ketubbot* 62b) adds: "When is the *onah* of the disciples of the wise? [i.e., What is the proper interval between two successive times of fulfilling this *mitsvah*?] Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shemu'el, 'From one Sabbath eve to the next.'"

See *Zohar* 1:14a–b, 50a, 112a (*MhN*); 2:63b, 89a–b, 136a–b; 3:49b, 78a, 81a, 82a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 120; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1232–33; Wolfson, "Eunuchs Who Keep the Sabbath."

172. **I asked the Holy Lamp...** Rabbi Yitsḥak asked Rabbi Shim'on about this, because *Shekhinah* (known as "lower crown") gathers the flow of emanation by day and distributes it to the angels by night. Presumably Her gathering by day coincides with Her union with *Tif'eret*,

whereas by night She does not engage in union but rather distributes below. If so, why is Sabbath eve an appropriate time for union?

On Rabbi Shim'on's title, "the Holy Lamp," see above, p. 68, n. 38.

173. **Surely coupling occurs on this night…** Rabbi Shim'on explains that on Sabbath eve, *Shekhinah* unites with *Tif'eret* to draw holy souls and convey them below to those who understand such mysteries.

174. **every single night coupling surely occurs…** Every midnight the divine couple unites. The wise, however, arrange to unite with their wives on Sabbath eve, when an additional spirit descends upon all of Israel ("the holy children"), issuing from *Keter* and conveyed below by *Shekhinah* ("the lower point").

On midnight as the appropriate time for conjugal union, see BT *Nedarim* 20a–b; *Zohar* 2:136a; 3:81a. On the additional Sabbath spirit, see above, note 163. On the verse in Exodus, see above, note 168.

175. **When the wise are dwelling…** While they are basking in the additional spirit of Sabbath, they should unite with their wives, for this spirit draws down a holy soul generated by the union of the divine couple above, ensuring that the human couple will engender a holy child.

176. **As soon as this spirit settles…** Rabbi Yitsḥak continues by explaining that on Sabbath eve Israel is completely protected by the additional Sabbath spirit and by *Shekhinah* Herself ("the canopy of peace"). Whereas on weeknights the second blessing following the *Shema* concludes "who guards His people Israel forever," on Sabbath eve (according to an Ashkenazic custom adopted in parts of Spain and promoted by the *Zohar*) this wording changes to "who spreads a canopy of peace over us, over His entire people Israel, and over Jerusalem."

See *Zohar* 1:48a; *ZḤ* 79b–c (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 112–13; *Sha'arei Teshuvah* (*Teshuvot ha-*

Ge'onim), 80; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1266, n. 139; Ta-Shma, *Minhag Ashkenaz ha-Qadmon*, 142–56; Liebes, "Ha-Zohar ke-Sefer Halakhah," 582. Cf. *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

177. **a person should not go out alone...** See BT *Pesaḥim* 112b: "One should not go out alone at night, neither on the eve of the fourth day [Wednesday] nor on the eve of Sabbath, because Agrat daughter of Maḥalat [Queen of Demons] goes out together with 180,000 angels of destruction, each empowered to wreak destruction independently."

178. **On the eve of Wednesday we must beware of them...** Of demons. In the opening words of God's command on the fourth day of Creation (corresponding to Wednesday), the word מארת (*me'orot*), *lights*, is written without *vav*s, the vowel letters. Such variant spelling is common in the Bible and affects neither the pronunciation nor the simple meaning of the words. As construed here, however, the deficient spelling alludes to a lack: the light of *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon) had diminished, and Her union with *Tif'eret* (symbolized by *vav*) was disrupted. The void was filled by demonic evil or "curse": מארה (*me'erah*). (One simple sense of the form מארת [*me'erat*] is "curse of," as in Proverbs 3:33.)

See JT *Ta'anit* 4:4, 68b; BT *Ta'anit* 27b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:1; *Soferim* 17:4; Rashi on Genesis 1:14; *Zohar* 1:1a, 12a, 19b, 33b–34a, 146a, 166a, 169a–b; 2:35b, 167b, 264b; 3:45a, 234a; *ZḤ* 69b–c (*ShS*). On the diminishment of the moon, see BT *Ḥullin* 60b (quoted below, n. 450). On the phrase "ravaging bands of dazzling demons," see above, note 18.

179. **On Sabbath eve...** As Sabbath is about to begin, the demons scatter from the world and are confined to their abode. However, on their way to the cavern of dust, they can still harm someone who is alone. Furthermore, even though they are powerless, they can sometimes appear and frighten a person.

180. **if so, the protection is defective…** If demons still pose a threat on Sabbath. Rabbi Yitsḥak explains that the protection consists of the additional Sabbath soul (pictured as a crown). One must preserve this crown by not venturing out alone or into uninhabited places.

181. **In any case, there is protection…** Because wherever *Shekhinah* ("the canopy of peace") appears, the demonic Other Side is absent.

182. **The lower point shines…** *Shekhinah* shines, and the primordial *sefirah, Keter* (described as Eldest of Eldest), is stimulated to issue a flow of emanation. As the morning light appears, Israel hastens to synagogue to pray, adorned with the additional Sabbath spirit, and the angels praise them.

The title סבא דכל סבין (*sava de-khol savin*), "Eldest of Elders," is a play on the philosophical term סבת הסבות (*sibbat ha-sibbot*), based on Latin *causa causarum*, "cause of causes," the ultimate ground of being. See *Zohar* 1:72b; 3:288b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 48b–c; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 4 (6–7); Scholem, *Über einige Grundbegriffe des Judentums*, 50.

183. **day of souls…** A day of spiritual bliss, on which the "bundle of souls" (*Shekhinah* or *Binah*) prevails.

On Sabbath as "the day of souls," cf. *Zohar* 2:136b: "Whenever Sabbath enters, one dwells in the world of souls." On the additional spirit being shared above and below, see above, note 168.

184. **three prayers…** The prayers of Sabbath eve, morning, and afternoon correspond to *Shekhinah, Tif'eret* (or *Yesod*), and *Binah*, each of which represents an aspect of Sabbath.

On the various sefirotic aspects of Sabbath, see *Zohar* 1:47b; 2:92a (*Piq*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1223–26.

185. **it is forbidden to engage…** The worshipers' attention should be focused solely on prayer.

On the danger of profaning the Sabbath with worldly matters or speech, see *Zohar* 3:105a. On the opposition to

conversing during prayer, see *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Wistinetzki), par. 1589; *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Margaliot), par. 18; *Zohar* 2:131b; 3:126a; Ḥallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 401–33. On two angels accompanying a person on Sabbath, cf. BT *Shabbat* 119b.

186. **This day is the day of souls…** So, fittingly, following the various psalms comes the prayer *Nishmat kol ḥai* (The soul of every living being).

The phrase "bundle of souls" refers to *Shekhinah* or *Binah*. On the prayer *Nishmat kol ḥai*, see *Zohar* 2:138a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 123–24. On Sabbath as the day of souls, see above, note 183.

187. **rung of mystery of the day…** The morning service soon continues with the blessing *Yotser or* (Who forms light), alluding to *Tif'eret*, who is symbolized by the sun. He nourishes the angels and numerous heavenly bodies.

188. **Praise, on this day, of the World that is Coming…** On Sabbath praise is offered to *Binah*, who is known as the World that is Coming. The consecutive lines of the acrostic prayer *El adon* (God, Master) begin respectively with each of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, adorning the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, as well as *Binah*, who serves as a chariot for the highest two *sefirot*. These letters of the alphabet are large, whereas a smaller set of alphabetical letters pertain to *Shekhinah* ("the lower world") and constitute the initial letters of the first twenty-two words of the weekday acrostic hymn, אל ברוך (*El barukh*), "Blessed God." Whereas in this weekday acrostic, each successive word begins with a successive alphabetical letter (with no other words intervening), in the Sabbath acrostic (*El adon*), each successive line begins with a successive alphabetical letter (with a number of words intervening). The extra words (or "space") allude to the more expansive holiness pertaining to *Binah*.

In the final sentence, "praise… offered by the seventh day" alludes to the line in the liturgy following *El adon*: "The

seventh day [itself] utters praise….” Here, “the seventh day” may refer specifically to *Shekhinah* (who offers praise to *Binah*) or to *Binah* (who offers praise to *Ḥokhmah*). For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar, Sullam, Matoq mi-Devash*.

On the relationship between Sabbath and the world that is coming, see below, note 244. On *Binah* as the World that is Coming, see above, pp. 34–35, n. 87. On *El Adon*, see *Zohar* 2:132a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 124. On the small and large letters, see *Zohar* 1:3b, 159b; 2:132a, 174a, 180b, 228b; 3:2a, 220a; *ZḤ* 65d (*ShS*), 66c (*ShS*), 74c–d (*ShS*).

189. **As this praise ascends…** As the praise of *El adon* ascends, angelic chariots convey it to the Garden of Eden. From there it ascends to *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the Throne.

190. **When this praise of all Israel…** Their chanting of *El adon* reaches *Shekhinah* and remains there until they recite the sanctification of *musaf*, at which point *Shekhinah* Herself ascends along with this praise to unite above with the higher *sefirot*.

191. **From here on…** Soon after *El adon*, the morning service proceeds as on weekdays until the conclusion of the *Qedushah* of the morning *Amidah*. Then comes the prayer *Yismaḥ Mosheh* (Moses rejoiced, with the gift of his portion). Moses represents *Tif’eret*, the core of the sefirotic triad *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret*, who are symbolized respectively by the three patriarchs. *Tif’eret* (or Moses) rejoices in His union with *Shekhinah* (“the Throne”). This couple is also symbolized respectively by Written Torah and Oral Torah.

In the Sephardic liturgy, soon after *Yismaḥ Mosheh* appears the line: “Those who keep Sabbath and call it a delight will rejoice in Your kingdom.” The next paragraph reads: “Our God and God of our fathers, be pleased with our rest….”

192. **mystery of the Torah scroll on this day…** When the Torah is read publicly on Sabbath. Whereas the Torah scroll itself contains no punctuation, all the minute

details of the text (including its verse divisions, tonal accents, and Masoretic traditions) were given to Moses at Mount Sinai.

See BT *Megillah* 3a, in the name of Rav: "What is the meaning of the verse *They read from the scroll of the Torah of God, explaining it and giving the sense, so that they understood the reading? They read from the scroll of the Torah of God*—the text. *Explaining it*—the [Aramaic] translation. *And giving the sense*—the verse divisions. *So that they understood the reading*—accentual divisions [or: tonal accents], or, as some say, the Masoretic traditions."

"Formal details" renders דיוקנין (*deyoqnin*), "images, forms." My rendering combines the sense of "form" with the sense conveyed by the alternate reading דיוקין (*diyyuqin*), "precisions, details," as attested by one manuscript (Ms24) and the later printed editions.

193. **When the holy Throne is crowned...** When *Shekhinah* (known as "the holy Throne") is joined with *Tif'eret* (known as "Written Torah"), all the formal details of the text are conveyed to Her. Yet the letters of the Written Torah itself remain in their pure original state. At the conclusion of the Sabbath reading, when the Torah scroll is lifted and displayed to the congregation, everyone sees these letters, unaccompanied by punctuation or other secondary details.

194. **men constituting mystery of Torah...** On Sabbath seven men are traditionally called up to the Torah (plus an additional man). This number corresponds to the number of heavenly voices heard at Mount Sinai and to the seven *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*. On holidays five are called up to the Torah (plus an additional one), perhaps corresponding to the five *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Hod*, or to *Gevurah* through *Yesod* (all beneath the primordial light of *Ḥesed*). The six who are called up to the Torah on Yom Kippur correspond to the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, which are also known as the "six directions." These six are

equivalent to the five *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Hod*, since *Yesod* includes them all.

According to a midrashic tradition, the heavenly voice at Mount Sinai divided into seven (and then seventy) voices. See *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 25, *Yitro* 11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemot* 22; *Midrash Tehillim* 68:6; 92:3. Cf. BT *Berakhot* 29a. For various interpretations of the sefirotic significance of the number five, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

195. **On the new moon...** Whereas on regular weekdays, three are called up to the Torah (apparently corresponding to *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*), on the new moon a fourth is added, corresponding to *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon), who is illumined by *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the sun). This additional person and additional illumination are signified by *musaf*, the "additional" offering and prayer for the new moon.

196. **With the Torah scroll...** When the Torah is chanted in the synagogue, only one person (either the person called up to the Torah or the congregational Torah reader) should chant it aloud, while the person standing next to him (the other of the two people) should remain silent. The single "voice and utterance" of the Torah reader ensures that the sefirotic couple, *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah* (known respectively as Voice and Utterance), will unite. See above, note 124.

197. **The arrangement to be prepared...** The Torah should be chanted from a special reader's desk on a raised platform or pulpit. The six steps leading to the pulpit correspond to those leading to the throne built by King Solomon. The phrase "one step above" refers to the reader's desk itself. See *Zohar* 3:164b.

198. **When the Torah scroll is lifted...** The people should listen in awe as the Torah is chanted.

The context in Nehemiah describes Ezra's public reading of the Torah. Verse 5 reads in full: *Ezra opened the scroll in the eyes of all the people, for he was above all the*

people; as he opened it, all the people stood up. See BT *Sotah* 39a, where *all the people stood* is interpreted to mean that they were silent.

199. **love is aroused above** The love between the divine couple is stimulated by Israel's worship.

200. **One should then say the following…** This prayer—the only one innovated in the *Zohar*—was incorporated into the Torah service for Sabbath morning under the influence of Isaac Luria, though opinions differ as to whether Luria intended it to be recited only on Sabbath or also on weekdays, or perhaps only on weekdays.

The prayer is known by its opening words *Berikh shemeih* (Blessed is His name). Due to its prominent place in the liturgy, it has become the *Zohar*'s most famous passage. Remarkably, the prayer (together with the preceding paragraph: "Rabbi Shim'on said…") is a later addition to the *Zohar*, as indicated already by Cordovero (*Or Yaqar*) and as evidenced by the fact that it appears in none of the following manuscripts: C9, M5, M9, Ms24, N10, N41, O17, P2, R1, T1, V5, V7, V18, nor in the text accompanying *Or Yaqar*. In O2 a bit of it is inserted by a later copyist, while in the Cremona edition it appears in a smaller, different font. The passage appears in full in the Mantua edition and in nearly all subsequent editions (those that are based on Mantua). In a fifteenth-century kabbalistic manuscript containing various compositions (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, heb. MS 835, 114b), this prayer is attributed to Naḥmanides. Nevertheless, because of the prayer's historical, cultural, and religious significance—and because it is so widely known—I have included it here, placing the entire passage in brackets.

"A son of God" renders literally בר אלהין (*bar elahin*), which can convey the idiomatic meaning "angel." See Daniel 3:25, 28. Here, though, this wording probably represents a polemic against Christian belief. The Paris manuscript

(referred to in the preceding paragraph) reads instead נש בר (*bar nash*), "a human being."

The clause "and acts abundantly in goodness and truth" derives from *Targum Onqelos*, Exodus 34:6, where it renders the biblical ורב חסד ואמת (*ve-rav ḥesed ve-emet*), *and abounding in kindness and truth* [or: *faithfulness*].

On this prayer, see Frankel, "Tefillat u-Vaqqashat 'Berikh Shemeih'"; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 122, 289.

201. **Only one person...** Rabbi Yitsḥaq is the speaker (as before the bracketed passage). He explains that only the congregational Torah reader (or the person called up to the Torah) should chant from the scroll, while the other of the two people should stand silently next to him. The unique status of Hebrew ("the holy tongue") should be matched by the single utterance of Torah. Multiple human voices could contaminate the divine unity.

See above, note 196; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1037–38.

202. **One translator...** Following the singular chanting of Torah, another person translates the passage into the vernacular. Just as the divine kernel is protected by a shell in order to be manifested in this world, so the Torah is accompanied by translation in order to be understood by all.

203. **All are silent while one reads...** The single public reader chanting from the pulpit corresponds to God, who spoke alone from atop Mount Sinai. The figure of Moses here may allude to the person in synagogue who stands silently next to the Torah reader.

204. **The one who reads the Torah...** The Torah reader in synagogue represents the divine revealer at Mount Sinai, so he should prepare carefully in advance.

The context in Job describes how God prepares wisdom for humankind and transmits it to them. According to midrashic sources, this biblical passage alludes to how carefully God prepared His revelation at Sinai and it shows

how a person should prepare any public reading or teaching of Torah.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 24:5; *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 15, *Vayaqhel* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayaqhel* 5; *Shemot Rabbah* 40:1. Job 28:28 reads in full: *He said to the human, "See! Awe of YHVH —that is wisdom; to shun evil is understanding."*

205. **Whoever reads the Torah…** One must chant the Torah precisely according to the divisions of each weekly portion and not include any words from the previous or following portions.

See *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1038; *Katz, Halakhah ve-Qabbalah*, 46. Cf. BT *Megillah* 22a.

206. **When the portions were divided…** God originally divided the Torah into fifty-three portions, each designated for a particular Sabbath. He then appointed the angel Yofiel (whose name means "Beauty of God") to minister to Torah with his fifty-three chariots.

Since the early Middle Ages, there have actually been fifty-four Torah portions, but the last one is read on *Shemini Atseret*, leaving fifty-three for Sabbath reading. Furthermore, in most years there are not as many Sabbaths as the number of Torah portions, and on Sabbaths that coincide with festivals other sections of Torah are read, so two Torah portions are sometimes joined together. See *Zohar* 1:104b (*MhN*); *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy*, 134–35. The *Zohar* ignores here the triennial cycle of reading the Torah, which had been practiced in the land of Israel and in Egypt as late as 1170 C.E.

On Yofiel, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 34:6; *Zohar* 1:108a (*ST*); 2:247b (*Heikh*); 3:2b, 197b; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 65–67. On the expression "contact… even by a hairsbreadth," see *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 12:29; BT *Berakhot* 48b.

207. **when a particular portion is crowned…** When the Torah portion of a particular Sabbath is chanted, its

words are conveyed to God and adorned upon *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the holy Throne). Thereby She is stimulated to ascend and unite with Her partner, *Tif'eret*.

On the importance of completing the Torah portion, see BT *Berakhot* 8a–b.

208. **We read from the Torah scroll twice...** In addition to the Sabbath morning reading, the Torah is also chanted during the *minḥah* service in the afternoon. This is normally a time of harsh Judgment, and even though Judgment does not prevail on Sabbath, still in the afternoon left (symbolizing *Din*) must be included in right (symbolizing *Ḥesed*). This is accomplished by reading publicly from the Torah, which combines right and left, as indicated by the verse in Deuteronomy; this verse mentions the divine *right hand* and alludes to the left, symbolized by fire. It reads in full: *YHVH from Sinai appeared and from Seir He shone upon them; He radiated from Mount Paran and He came from myriads of holy ones; from His right hand, a fiery law for them*. See *Zohar* 1:198a, 243a; 2:81a, 84a–b, 135a, 166b, 223a; 3:176a.

On afternoon as a time of Judgment and the special quality of Sabbath afternoon, see *Zohar* 1:95b, 132b, 182b, 230a; 2:21a (*MhN*), 36b, 88b, 156a; 3:64b, 129a (*IR*), 136a–b (*IR*), 288b (*IZ*), 293a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 87; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:963–64. According to *Soferim* 11:5, the Sabbath afternoon Torah reading must include at least ten verses.

209. **On Monday and Thursday...** When the Torah is also read publicly. These days apparently correspond to the lower *sefirot*, including *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* (or to other rungs beneath the sefirotic realm). One might argue that since *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* are linked with prophecy, it would be fitting to chant from the Prophets on these two days, rather than from the Torah. However, Rabbi Yitsḥak explains that the lower *sefirot* include the qualities of the higher sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, and since *Tif'eret* symbolizes

Torah, the lower *sefirot* also represent "the totality of Torah." For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

210. **Mystery of the matter…** The seven supernal sefirotic rungs from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah* correspond to the seven men who are called to the Torah on Sabbath morning, when an entire weekly portion is chanted. From these higher rungs emerge nine lower rungs, corresponding to the total of nine who are called to the Torah on Sabbath afternoon, Monday, and Thursday.

211. **In the Book of Rav Yeiva Sava…** According to this source, on Sabbath afternoon the power of *Din* is aroused (although not harshly as on weekdays) and *Shekhinah* ("the lower point"), which tends toward the left, receives from *Tif'eret* (who is symbolized by Torah). The total of nine who are called to the Torah correspond to the nine upper *sefirot* (or their counterparts within *Shekhinah* Herself). The "three supernal sides" are *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*.

Rav Yeiva Sava (the Elder) is a minor figure in the Babylonian Talmud, but assumes a prominent role in the *Zohar*, culminating in *Sava de-Mishpatim* (2:94b–114a), where he appears as a donkey-driver who turns out to be a master of wisdom. The *Zohar* frequently cites his book, one of the many volumes housed in a real or imaginary library. See the comment by Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, on *Zohar* 1:7a: "All such books mentioned in the *Zohar*… have been lost in the wanderings of exile…. Nothing is left of them except what is mentioned in the *Zohar*." For a catalogue of these books, see Neuhausen, *Sifriyyah shel Ma'lah*. On Rav Yeiva Sava, see BT *Pesaḥim* 103b, *Bava Qamma* 49b; *Zohar* 1:47b, 79b, 117b, 225a; 2:6a, 60b; 3:7b, 155b, 289a (*IZ*), 290a (*IZ*), 295a (*IZ*).

212. ***Let no one go out from his place…*** According to rabbinic sources, this restriction refers to a distance of two thousand cubits, which is the maximum distance one may walk beyond the city on Sabbath. Rabbi Yitsḥak

explains the deeper significance of the word *place*, which alludes to *Shekhinah*, the site of Divine Glory, associated with Sabbath.

The full verse in Exodus 16 reads: *See that YHVH has given you the Sabbath. Therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Stay, each where he is; let no one go out from his place on the seventh day*. On the rabbinic interpretation of *let no one go out from his place*, see *Mekhilta, Vayassa* 5; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 16:29; BT *Eruvin* 51a.

The verse in Exodus 3 records God's command to Moses at the Burning Bush: *Come no closer here. Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place you are standing on is holy ground*. Rabbi Yitsḥak implies that *Shekhinah* filled this *place*.

213. **a person who is adorned…** Everyone observing Sabbath is adorned with an additional soul, which he should not abandon by profaning the holiness of the day through mundane speech, manual labor, or walking too far.

On the additional Sabbath soul, see above, note 163. On the restriction against mundane speech on Sabbath, see BT *Shabbat* 113a–b.

214. **glorious place of holiness…** The realm of *Shekhinah*, outside of which lurk demonic forces known as "other gods."

215. ***Glory of YHVH*—above…** Referring to *Tif'eret*, who is known as *YHVH*. The expression *His place* alludes to *Shekhinah*, from whom issues the additional Sabbath soul crowning Israel.

216. ***Look, there is a place by Me…*** This *place*, concealed and unknowable, is the hidden realm of *Keter*, which represents a palace (as it were) for *Ein Sof*.

217. **But this is a place below…** The place mentioned in Ezekiel (*from His place*) refers to *Shekhinah*. Thus the word *place* applies both "above" (to *Keter*) and "below" (to *Shekhinah*).

218. ***You shall measure outside the town…*** In rabbinic sources, this reference to *two thousand in cubits* is equated with the maximum distance one may walk beyond the city on the Sabbath. Here, Rabbi Yitsḥak applies the expression to *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by *the town*. She is crowned "on two sides, both above and below," which may refer to *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* above, and *Netsaḥ* and *Hod* below. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. Cf. Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 359.

The full verse in Numbers reads: *You shall measure outside the town the eastern limit two thousand in cubits and the southern limit two thousand in cubits and the western limit two thousand in cubits and the northern limit two thousand in cubits, with the town in the middle. This will be their towns' pasturelands*. On the interpretation of *two thousand cubits* as referring to the Sabbath limit, see *Sifrei Zuta* 15:32; BT *Eruvin* 51a; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bemidbar* 9; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 2:9; *Zohar* 1:9a. Cf. above, note 212.

219. **As Sabbath departs…** One should not conclude Sabbath immediately at sunset, since thereby one would be urging a precious guest—namely the additional Sabbath soul—to leave.

220. ***Yet He is compassionate…*** The full verse in Psalms, which precedes the daily evening service, reads: *Yet He is compassionate, He purges iniquity and does not destroy, and often restrains His wrath and does not arouse all His rage*. On Sabbath eve, when harsh Judgment is eliminated, this verse is inappropriate and should not be recited. However, when Sabbath departs and the powers of Judgment are reinstated, it is fitting to invoke divine compassion.

The Ashkenazic custom of omitting this verse on Sabbath eve spread to Spain and by the time of the *Zohar* had largely displaced the native Sephardic custom of

reciting the verse. See Abraham ben Nathan ha-Yarḥi, *Sefer ha-Manhig*, 1:118–19, 133; *Zohar* 2:130a, 135b; *ZḤ* 79b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 113–14; *Sha'arei Teshuvah* (*Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim*), 80; Katz, *Halakhah ve-Qabbalah*, 44–45; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 29; Liebes, "Ha-Zohar ke-Sefer Halakhah," 582, 584–85. Cf. Vol. 1, p. 264, n. 1220.

221. ***May the kindness* [*of* YHVH *be upon us*]...** As Sabbath concludes, this verse is recited along with *Qedushah de-Sidra* (Sanctification of the Scriptural Section), which is a version of the *Qedushah* in Hebrew and Aramaic, originally recited after a public Scriptural lesson. Then the wicked in Hell—who have been spared from punishment throughout Sabbath—praise Israel and resume suffering.

According to *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 33, one of the dwellers in Hell reports: "Whoever does not observe the Sabbath properly [*Bereshit Rabbah* 11:5: "willingly"] in your world comes here and observes it against his will.... All week long we are punished and on the Sabbath we rest, and [we continue resting] as Sabbath departs until [*Qedushah de-Sidra*] has been completed. Once it is completed, an angel named Dumah, appointed over souls, comes and takes the souls of those people [i.e., our souls] and slings them...."

The full verse in Psalms reads: *May the kindness of YHVH be upon us. The work of our hands, establish for us; the work of our hands, establish it*. On *Qedushah de-Sidra*, see BT *Sotah* 49a, and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *a-qedushah de-sidra*; *Zohar* 1:14b; 2:129a, 132b–133a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 85; Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy*, 70–71.

On the wicked in Hell resting on Sabbath, see above, note 155. Dumah, literally "silence," is a name for the netherworld in the Bible. See Psalms 94:17: *Were not YHVH a help to me, my soul would have nearly dwelt in dumah*. Cf. Psalms 115:17. In rabbinic literature Dumah is the angel in charge of souls of the dead (BT *Berakhot* 18b, *Shabbat* 152b,

Sanhedrin 94a). In the *Zohar* he retains this role and oversees Hell.

On the phrase “ravaging bands of dazzling demons,” see above, note 18. In the final sentence, the expression “those who… delight that joy” refers to those who delight the additional Sabbath soul. See above, notes 167–69.

222. **If someone fasts on Sabbath…** By fasting on this joyous day, one fails to delight the additional Sabbath soul, which is therefore aroused against him together with the angel Sangarya, who normally advocates for those who fast. Since the additional Sabbath soul is deprived of pleasure, it is imperfect, and its imperfection taints the other part of the additional soul remaining above within the realm of *Shekhinah*. Therefore the person fasting deserves severe punishment. However, since on other occasions he succeeds in delighting and perfecting the additional Sabbath soul, any heavenly decrees issued against him by the seven lower *sefirot* (“seventy supernal years”) are nullified.

On fasting on Sabbath and on the reference to “seventy years,” see BT *Berakhot* 31b: “Rabbi El’azar said in the name of Rabbi Yose son of Zimra, ‘If one sits fasting on Sabbath, [even] a decree of seventy years standing against him is tom up [i.e., annulled]. Yet even so, he is still punished for [ruining] the delight of Sabbath.’ What is his remedy? Rav Naḥman son of Yitsḥak said, ‘Let him sit fasting [on a weekday to atone] for this fast.’” See *Zohar* 2:165b; 3:89b, 105a–b.

The name סנגריא (*Sangarya*) is based on the legal term סניגוריא (*saneigorya*), from Greek *sunegoria*, “defense, advocacy.” Cf. *Zohar* 2:253a (*Heikh*). On the two parts of the additional soul, see above, notes 168–69.

223. **Afterward those princes…** Since, by fasting, this person diminished joy and perfection both above and below, he still deserves punishment. His only remedy is to fast on a weekday in order to atone for ruining the Sabbath delight. Otherwise, by indulging in weekday joy he appears to honor

the demonic force (“another god”) who prevails during the week more than he honors God who bestowed upon him the additional Sabbath soul.

See the passage from BT *Berakhot*, quoted in the preceding note.

224. **Therefore another fast is required…** As soon as possible. See Rashi on BT *Berakhot* 31b, s.v. *ta’anita*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

According to the Talmud, a thief (who commits his crime in stealth) is punished more severely than a robber (who commits his crime openly). Whereas if a robber is caught, he must simply *return the object that he robbed*, a thief is required to pay back double or more. The reason, according to Rabbi Yoḥanan son of Zakkai, is that the thief is more concerned about human beings seeing him steal than he is about God seeing him, whereas the robber is equally concerned (or unconcerned) about both—and thus does not elevate humans above God. See Exodus 21:37; 22:3; BT *Bava Qamma* 79b; *Zohar* 3:16a.

One who atones for fasting on Sabbath by immediately fasting on a weekday demonstrates that he does not value the weekday spirit more than the Sabbath spirit.

225. **The sanctification of the entrance of Sabbath…** The *qiddush* for Sabbath eve consists of two paragraphs plus the blessing over wine (in between them). The first paragraph, which begins with ויכלו (*Va-ykhullu*), [*The heavens and the earth*] *were completed*, celebrates and testifies to Creation and divine rest. Its thirty-five words represent the thirty-two paths of Wisdom (which is also known as Beginning, or Creation) and the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif’eret*, whose respective colors (white, red, and green) are associated with the apple: the white of the apple’s pulp, the red of the skin, and the green of the leaves.

The expression “three rungs” also corresponds to the three references to *seventh* in the first paragraph of the

qiddush. The first of these refers to *Binah*, who includes and emanates the seven lower *sefirot*. The second refers to *Shekhinah*, last of the lower seven. The third refers to "mystery of all faith," which may imply the totality of the lower seven. The word *Elohim* also appears three times in this paragraph, alluding to three *sefirot* that share this name: *Shekhinah, Gevurah* (or *Paḥad* [Fear], symbolized by the patriarch Isaac), and *Binah*.

On the atoning power of reciting *qiddush*, see BT *Shabbat* 119b, in the name of Mar Ukba: "Whoever prays on Sabbath eve and recites *Va-ykhullu*, the two ministering angels who accompany a person place their hands on his head and say to him, '*Your iniquity is removed and your sin purged* (Isaiah 6:7).'"

On the thirty-two paths of Wisdom, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1–2. On the image of apples, see Vol. 4, p. 62, n. 274. On the three references to *seventh*, see *Zohar* 1:47b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 111.

226. **Who has sanctified us…** This concluding paragraph of the *qiddush* also contains thirty-five words, if one omits two clauses: כי הוא יום (*ki hu yom*), "for it is the day," and כי בנו בחרת ואותנו קדשת מכל העמים (*ki vanu vaḥarta ve-otanu qiddashta mi-kol ha-ammim*), "for You have chosen us and hallowed us from among all nations." Thus it "balances perfectly" the thirty-five words of the opening paragraph, which testifies to Creation and the sefirotic mystery of faith. The total of seventy words adorns *Shekhinah*, who is identified with the entrance of Sabbath (or Sabbath eve).

On the exact wording of the second paragraph, see *Zohar* 1:5b; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 63, 138–39, n. 159. As Ta-Shma indicates, the medieval version of the *qiddush* current in Greece omits the two clauses in the concluding paragraph, which thus contains precisely thirty-five words, and here the *Zohar* supports this version.

227. ***qiddush* of the day…** Whereas on Sabbath eve the *qiddush* consists of two blessings (the blessing over the wine and "who has sanctified us by His commandments"), the *qiddush* for the day of Sabbath consists of only one blessing (the blessing over the wine). This is because now *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the day) sanctifies *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the cup of wine), whereas on Sabbath eve Israel themselves must sanctify Her by the seventy words of the *qiddush* when they receive from Her the additional Sabbath soul.

In the penultimate sentence "by its holiness" apparently refers to the holiness of *Shekhinah*. On the single blessing of the *qiddush* for Sabbath day, see BT *Pesaḥim* 106a.

228. **Once Sabbath has departed…** Its departure is marked by the prayer *Havdalah* (Differentiation), which distinguishes between the holiness of Sabbath and the mundane quality of the weekdays. This is the time of the changing of the cosmic guard, when *Shekhinah* cedes authority to angels below to conduct the world during the weekdays. By reciting *Havdalah*, one distinguishes between *Shekhinah* ("the holy place"), who dwells within the unity of

the sefirotic realm, and the lower weekday powers. On *Havdalah*, see Ginsburg, *The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah*, 256–84.

229. **One should bless over the light of fire…** *Havdalah* includes the blessing "… who creates the lights of fire." All other fires (of the angels and of demonic forces) are hidden away throughout Sabbath, and only the fire of *Shekhinah* prevails. She is pictured as a divine altar, and correspondingly fire is permitted to burn on Sabbath on the Temple altar. Her fire issues from "fire above," symbolizing *Gevurah* (or *Din*), which is linked with Isaac; so the fire of *Shekhinah* represents "the fire of the Binding of Isaac." She can endure the fierce fire of *Gevurah* and convey it safely to the world, so She is "fire that endures fire."

The fire used during *Havdalah* "must not be weekday fire but rather fire of Sabbath," which means that it must have "observed Sabbath," as it were, by not burning during Sabbath for mundane or forbidden purposes. See BT *Berakhot* 52b–53a, *Pesaḥim* 54a; Vital; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 112–13, n. 27.

As soon as the fire of *Havdalah* (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) is blessed, all the lower angelic fires issue to rule the new week.

Here Rabbi Yitsḥak finally addresses (at least in passing) the question he raised earlier as to why fire is permitted to burn on the Temple altar on Sabbath. See above, note 156.

On the blessing over fire, see above, note 154. On *Shekhinah* as "fire that endures fire," see above, p. 48, n. 124. Cf. BT *Yoma* 21b, where the fire of *Shekhinah* is described as "fire consuming fire."

230. **At the moment we bless over fire…** The four angelic camps are headed by the four archangels: Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael. Upon reciting the blessing "who creates the lights of fire," one should bend the four long fingers of the right hand and let them be illumined by

the light of the *Havdalah* candle (or here, lamp). This act symbolizes the illumination and empowerment of the four angelic camps by the fire of *Shekhinah* and demonstrates that they are beneath Her and subservient to Her.

In other blessings (for example, over washing the hands or the priestly blessing), all ten fingers are raised to symbolize the ten *sefirot*, which shine from *Keter* ("the highest lamp of all"). During *Havdalah*, however, the fingers are bent to indicate the lower, angelic rungs, which shine from *Shekhinah* ("the lamp below").

On bending the fingers before the fire of *Havdalah* and looking at the fingernails, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 20, and David Luria, ad loc., n. 20; *Zohar* 1:20b–21a; *Sha'arei Teshuvah* (*Teshuvot ha-Ge'onim*), 104; Finesinger, "The Custom of Looking at the Fingernails"; Noy, "Histakkelut ba-Tsippornayim"; Ginsburg, *The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah*, 272–74; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 322–23.

On the symbolism of the ten fingers, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:3; *Midrash Tadshe* 10 (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:174); *Bahir* 87 (124), 94 (138); Naḥmanides on Exodus 17:12; 30:19; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, 29b–c; idem, *Sha'ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 1:20b–21a; 2:57a, 67a, 75b–77a; 3:143a (*IR*), 145a (*Piq*), 186a–b, 195b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254.

231. **Every day we recite the blessing 'luminaries of light'...** In the morning service. These "luminaries of light" are the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, which are all included in the primordial light of *Ḥesed* itself. On the other hand, "lights of fire" mentioned in *Havdalah* are the angels who are illumined by the fire of *Shekhinah*. The precise wording of this *Havdalah* blessing ("who creates the lights of fire") refers to the fact that throughout Sabbath the angelic lights are totally absorbed within the lamp of *Shekhinah*, and She alone ("that point") is visible; then, when Sabbath departs, She generates and "creates" them all anew.

232. **Similarly, those upper rungs…** The *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, called "luminaries of light," issue from *Binah* (the Supernal Lamp) and rule over the day. Each night, as authority passes to *Shekhinah* and the angels beneath Her, *Binah* gathers in these upper lights; then the next morning, She generates them anew, when stimulated by Israel's blessing: "who forms the luminaries of light."

In the morning service the verb יוצר (*yotser*), "forms," pertains to the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, whereas in *Havdalah* the verb בורא (*bore*), "creates," pertains to the angelic forces beneath *Shekhinah* ("the lights of fire"). This ranking of the verbs contrasts with the theory presented in *Ra'aya Meheimna, Tiqqunei ha-Zohar*, and later Kabbalah, where בריאה (*Beri'ah*), "Creation," represents a higher world than יצירה (*Yetsirah*), "Formation." See *Zohar* 2:155a (Vol. 5, p. 407, n. 625); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1297; above, p. 89, n. 94.

"Dusks" renders רמש (*remash*), an apparently Zoharic verb based on רמשא (*ramsha*), "evening." See *Zohar* 1:34b; 2:36b, 171a, 173a, 188a; 3:21a–b, 52b, 113b, 149a–b, 166b; *ZḤ* 7d (*MhN*), 25d (*MhN*), 28b (*MhN*).

233. **All is mystery, hinted by the fingers…** When the fingers are raised during certain prayers and blessings, they indicate the *sefirot*; when they are bent during *Havdalah*, they indicate the angels. These angels ("lower rungs") benefit also when the fingers are raised, since they receive blessing from the *sefirot* via *Shekhinah*.

234. **This mystery is the fingernails…** The fingernails, on the back of the fingers, symbolize the angels, who are outer countenances, called "the back." These angels form a kind of garment for the *sefirot*, who are inner countenances, symbolized by the fleshy part of the fingers.

On the fingers and fingernails, see above, note 230; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1297. The full verse in Exodus reads: *I will take away My palm and you will see My back, but My face will not be seen*.

235. **When we bless over the lamp…** In *Havdalah*, as one recites the blessing over the flame, he bends the fingers in toward the palm and gazes at the light reflected off the fingernails, which symbolize the weekday angelic forces illumined and empowered by the fire of *Shekhinah*. The inner surfaces of the fingers remain hidden, since they symbolize the *sefirot*, which are illumined not by *Shekhinah* ("the lamp that is revealed") but by *Keter* ("the Supernal Lamp"). See above, note 230.

236. **One should smell spices…** During *Havdalah*, to assuage the loss of the additional Sabbath soul.

On the additional Sabbath soul, see above, note 163. On the connection between smelling spices and the loss of this soul, see *Tosafot, Beitsah* 33b, s.v. *ki haveinan*; *Zohar* 3:35b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 130. "Naked" renders בערטורא (*be-irtura*), which is apparently a variation on בערטולא (*be-irtula*), "in nakedness." See Vol. 5, p. 36, n. 105.

237. ***He smelled the fragrance…*** The subject is Isaac the patriarch, who smelled the fragrance of the garments worn by his son Jacob (which were actually Esau's garments). The full verse reads: *He smelled the fragrance of his garments and blessed him and said, "See, the fragrance of my son is like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH."*

On the spiritual effect of fragrance, see BT *Berakhot* 43b, in the name of Rav: "What is it that gives enjoyment to the soul and not to the body? You must say that this is fragrance."

238. **those garments derived from Adam…** According to a rabbinic tradition, Esau's garments (worn by Jacob when he sought Isaac's blessing) had originally been fashioned by God for Adam. When Adam was cast out of the Garden, he took these garments with him. They were passed on through the generations to Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, Ham, and then to Nimrod, King of Babylonia and Assyria, whose spectacular success as a hunter (Genesis

10:9) derived from the fact that he wore these supernatural clothes. Seeing Nimrod in these clothes, Esau coveted them and killed him for them.

According to Genesis 3:21, after Adam and Eve sinned God fashioned garments for them: *YHVH Elohim made coats of skin for Adam and his wife, and He clothed them*. The simple sense of כתנות עור (*kotnot or*), *coats of skin*, is "coats of animal skin, hides," but a variant reading recorded in midrashic literature is כתנות אור (*kotnot or*), *coats of light*, suggesting Adam and Eve's original aura or garments of splendor. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 20:12: "In the Torah [scroll] of Rabbi Me'ir, it was found written: 'כתנות אור (*kotnot or*), *garments of light*.' These are the clothes of Adam…." Elsewhere the *Zohar* teaches that as a result of eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, Adam and Eve lost their lustrous *coats of light* and from then on were clothed in human *coats of skin*.

Here Rabbi Yitsḥak describes Adam's original garment as an angelic garment, as hard and protective as fingernails.

On the garments shared by Adam and Jacob, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 24; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 27:15; *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:13; 65:16; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 12; Rashi on BT *Pesaḥim* 54b, s.v. *bigdo shel adam ha-rishon*; *Midrash Aggadah*, Genesis 27:15; *Sefer ha-Yashar, Toledot*, 133; *Zohar* 1:73b, 137b, 142b; 2:39a–b; *ZḤ* 65a (*ShS*). Cf. *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Genesis 48:22; *Bereshit Rabbah* 97(98):6.

On *kotnot or*, *coats of skin* [or: *of light*], see *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:6; 20:12 (and Theodor's note); *Zohar* 1:36b, 224a; 2:179a (*SdTs*), 229b; 3:83a–b, 261b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 404; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 404, n. 87. For Gnostic parallels, see Origen, *Contra Celsum* 4:40; *Apocryphon of John* 21:31–35; *Hypostasis of the Archons* 90:15–17; Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 1:5:5.

On Adam and Eve's "garments of nail," see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 3:7; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 14; Joseph ben Shalom Ashkenazi, *Peirush Qabbali li-Vreshit Rabbah*, 243–44. On "the back," see above, note 234.

239. **those garments were removed from him...** His original "garments of nail" were removed, and all that was left of them were his fingernails, surrounded by demonic forces.

On the negative or demonic aspect of nails, see BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 18a, *Niddah* 17a; *Zohar* 1:20b–21a; 2:76a, 172b; 3:79a–b, 248b; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 219–22.

240. **a person must not let those nails of filth grow...** Because the demonic forces associated with nails (and identified with "slag") can overwhelm him. Similarly, nail parings must not be thrown away haphazardly (which shows disdain for their origin), since that person (or others who pass by) could be harmed. Above too, even the angelic "backs" are surrounded by the demonic Other Side, who craves their power.

"Slag" renders קסטורא (*qastora*), apparently deriving from קסטירא (*qastira*), which is based on Greek *kassiteros*, "tin." In *Zohar* 2:31b, אקוסטרא (*aqustera*) apparently means toxic "slag." In *Zohar* 3:83b (*Piq*), *qastora* is parallel with פסולת (*pesolet*), "dross." On *qastira*, see *Targum Yerushalmi* and *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Numbers 31:22; *Zohar* 1:125a, 151a; 2:24b; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 186, 188; *Ma'arikh*, s.v. *qstr*; Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *qastera*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 349. Cf. Vol. 5, p. 501, n. 881.

On the danger of throwing away nail parings, see BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 18a, *Niddah* 17a; *Zohar* 2:172b; 3:79a–b. On the "backs," see above, note 234.

241. **He made for Adam other garments...** Replacing his original angelic garments. These second garments were eventually worn by Jacob when he approached his father, Isaac, seeking a blessing. When

Isaac *smelled the fragrance of* [Jacob's] *garments*, his soul was calmed. See above, note 238.

242. **The finest fragrant aroma is myrtle...** This is the ideal fragrance to inhale as Sabbath departs. Since it sustains *Yesod* (or possibly *Shekhinah*), the source of souls, myrtle also sustains the human soul when it is stripped of the additional Sabbath soul.

Here myrtle may correspond to *Yesod* (who is called Righteous One), since myrtle designates the righteous according to BT *Megillah* 13a, *Sanhedrin* 93a. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Derekh Emet*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1237; Scholem; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

See above, note 236. On the significance of myrtle, see *Zohar* 1:17b; 2:20a (*MhN*); 3:35a–b; Lauterbach, "The Origin and Development of Two Sabbath Ceremonies"; Ginsburg, *The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah*, 263–67; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 125, n. 84; Hallamish, *Ha-Qabbalah*, 178, 323.

243. **When Sabbath departed...** When the first Sabbath ended, Adam was clothed in fragrant garments, which sustained his soul, now that the additional Sabbath soul had departed from him and he felt the consequences of his sin of eating from the Tree of Knowledge. Similarly, as each Sabbath departs, the fragrance of myrtle sustains one's soul.

244. **That supernal spirit descends...** The additional Sabbath soul provides a foretaste of the world that is coming.

On the relation between Sabbath and the world that is coming, see *Mekhilta, Shabbeta* (*Ki Tissa*) 1; *Bereshit Rabbah* 17:5; BT *Berakhot* 57b; *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:346). Cf. M *Tamid* 7:4; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 1; BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 31a; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:1; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 19.

Isaiah 58:11 reads in full: *YHVH will guide you always; He will satisfy* נפשך (*nafshekha*), *your thirst* [or: *soul*], בצחצחות (*be-tsaḥtsaḥot*), *in parched regions, and invigorate your bones. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters do not fail*. Rabbi Yitsḥak understands the rare word בצחצחות (*be-tsaḥtsaḥot*), *in parched regions*, to mean "with radiancies," based on the root צחח (*tsḥḥ*), "to gleam." See *Zohar* 1:113b–114a (*MhN*), 141a, 224b; 2:97a, 142b, 210b.

245. **Rabbi Abba and the two Companions...** Rabbi Abba, Rabbi Ḥiyya, and Rabbi Yose kissed the head of Rabbi Yitsḥak, in recognition of his profound teachings. For their original encounter, see above at note 61.

246. **those three lights... they are you...** The lights that he saw prefigured the three Companions that he soon encountered.

247. **Until now I did not know...** The Companions' precious words ascend to the Divine Throne (which often symbolizes *Shekhinah*), and they are woven into crowns for God by the Prince of the Countenance, a title that can apply to the chief angel, Metatron. See *Or Yaqar*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

On possessing pearls of teaching, see BT *Ḥagigah* 3a; *Zohar* 1:148b; *ZḤ* 10b (*MhN*). Cf. BT *Berakhot* 17a, *Sanhedrin* 50b, *Zevaḥim* 36b. On weaving words into crowns, see above, note 115.

248. **At midnight...** This is the time when God delights in the souls of the righteous in the Garden of Eden, and those who study Torah here below partake of this joy. On the ritual of engaging in Torah at midnight, see above, note 14.

249. ***ten curtains...*** These curtains cover the tent-like Tabernacle (or Dwelling). The terms *violet, purple*, and *crimson* refer to dyed yarns. See above, note 50.

Rabbi Abba wonders why the verse in Psalms repeats the word *heavens*. He explains that this apparent redundancy actually indicates that there are *heavens* below, above our earth, and *heavens* above—namely *Tif'eret*,

beneath whom is *Shekhinah* (known as *earth*). Everything in the world corresponds to a divine reality above.

250. **Heavens below are *ten curtains*...** The *ten curtains* of the Dwelling symbolize the ten heavenly spheres. These ten spheres include one for each of the seven "planets" (as understood in ancient and medieval astronomy: the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn), and an eighth sphere for the fixed stars. The ninth and tenth spheres are described differently by various authorities. See Abraham Ibn Ezra on Psalms 8:4 (cf. idem [long] on Exodus 20:13 [14]); David Kimḥi on Psalms 8:5; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 20:17 (14); 26:2.

"Camps" refers to camps of angels. The phrase "closely concatenated" renders אקופטרא דקילטא (*aquftera de-qilta*). In the *Zohar* the root קפטר (*qftr*) often conveys "tying, binding, linking." See above, p. 31, n. 79. The root קלט (*qlt*) can mean "clutch tightly." See *Zohar* 2:235b (*Tos*); 3:59b; Scholem. Maimonides (in *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 3:2) describes the arrangement of the numerous heavenly spheres as being "like גלדי (*gildei*), skins of, an onion." Perhaps the Zoharic term *qilta* plays on גילדא (*gilda*), "layer, skin." See *Zohar* 3:9b.

251. **In each of them are assigned camps...** Of angels, from the first sphere (the lowest) up to the seventh. From there above, a splendor emanating from *Shekhinah* (the Throne) illumines first the highest sphere (the tenth), which conveys radiance to the ninth.

252. **When the hosts of stars are enumerated...** When God enumerates and designates the stars, He does so through the eighth sphere, which conveys the splendor from above.

253. **Every single heaven is assigned...** God rules the entire world, but He designated seventy heavenly princes to govern the other nations, whereas only Israel is ruled directly by Him.

On God's direct control of the land of Israel, see BT *Ta'anit* 10a; *Tanḥuma, Re'eh* 8; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 18:25; *Zohar* 1:61a, 84b, 108b; 2:141a–b, 151b; 3:189a. On the seventy heavenly princes, see above, p. 40, n. 104.

In the phrase "every single heaven" (and often in this passage), the word "heaven" renders רקיעא (*reqi'a*), "expanse, firmament, heaven."

254. **How can a heaven spread over the land of Israel for nothing?...** If God conducts the land of Israel, then what function is served by the heaven spread over this land?

On the heavenly princes, see the preceding note. On the residue, see BT *Ta'anit* 10a: "The land of Israel drinks water directly from the rain, while the rest of the world drinks of the drippings [Munich MS: of the land of Israel]."

See Naḥmanides on Deuteronomy 11:10–12; *Zohar* 1:84b, 108b; 2:22b, 152b; 3:209b, 265b; *ZḤ* 9d (*MhN*), 61b (*MhN, ShS*), 81a, 87d (both *MhN, Rut*).

255. **Each heaven has certain openings...** Each heavenly power ruling over a particular land from the heavenly opening cannot encroach on another heavenly opening, unless he is authorized to do so, in which case the earthly ruler of the nation controlled by the first heavenly power will defeat the ruler of a neighboring nation.

On the clause "he does not rule by even a hairsbreadth," see BT *Berakhot* 48b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "One kingdom does not overlap another by even a hairs-breadth." On the relation between the fate of a heavenly power and that of his nation, see Isaiah 24:21; Vol. 5, p. 522, n. 945.

256. **In the middle of all those heavens...** The land of Israel lies in the middle of civilization, and above it stretches a special heaven. The opening called גבלון (*Gavlon*)—apparently based on גבול (*gevul*), "boundary"—marks the middle of this heaven. The gateway called מגדון (*Magdon*)—apparently based on מגד (*meged*), "bounty, harvest of fruits"—

marks the outer border or circumference of this heaven. The term *meged* appears five times in Deuteronomy 33:13–16, describing the fertile tribal territory of Joseph.

On the seventy princes, see above, note 253. On the significance of two thousand cubits, see above, note 218.

257. **All those openings...** These are engraved on the Throne, which symbolizes *Shekhinah* (known as Righteousness). God provides for the land of Israel from the opening called Gavlon to the gateway called Magdon. From the residue, the seventy princes provide for all other nations. See above, notes 253–54.

258. **In the Garden of Eden below...** The earthly Garden of Eden has its own special heaven. The heavens above most of the world were fashioned from fire and water. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 4:7, in the name of Rav: "The blessed Holy One took אש (*esh*), fire, and מים (*mayim*), water, mixed them with one another, and from them שמים (*shamayim*), heavens, were made." See BT *Ḥagigah* 12a.

These heavens extended until the Garden of Eden, where they halted. Then, for the special heaven of the Garden itself, God took supernal fire and water (symbolizing *Gevurah* and *Ḥesed*) from *Tif'eret* (known as Heaven) and fashioned a more rarefied heaven, joined to the heaven of this world.

On the heaven above the Garden, see *Zohar* 2:130b, 136a; *ZḤ* 82d, 90a–91b (both *MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 132–33.

259. **four colors in that expanse of heaven...** These correspond to *Ḥesed* (white), *Gevurah* (red), *Tif'eret* (green), and *Shekhinah* (black). On the colors, see Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 131–33.

260. **In the opening on the right...** Corresponding to *Ḥesed*, the divine right arm, which is also symbolized by water. "The Countenance" apparently corresponds to *Tif'eret*.

261. **the letter מ (*mem*)...** The initial letter of the name of the archangel מיכאל (*Mikha'el*), Michael.

262. **the letter ר (*resh*)...** The initial letter of the name of the archangel רפאל (*Repha'el*), Raphael. He is sometimes known as בואל (*Bo'el*), Boel, meaning "God is in him."

On Boel, see *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:27); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 67; *Zohar* 2:133b, 147a–b; *ZḤ* 48c; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 18.

263. **These two letters endure...** Representing the two archangels, who soon appear to greet the righteous soul and welcome her to the Garden of Eden. On the verse in Isaiah, see above, note 85.

264. **one the letter ג (*gimel*) and one the letter נ (*nun*)...** The initial letters, respectively, of the names of the archangels גבריאל (*Gavri'el*), Gabriel, and נוריאל (*Nuri'el*), Nuriel, who is also known as Uriel.

265. **chamber called Aloes...** Where various spices of the earthly Garden are stored.

For an attempt to identify twelve spices in the verse from Song of Songs, see *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. Cf. *Zohar* 2:117a (*RM*), where this verse said to include seven spices, and 2:132a, where it is said to include thirteen.

266. **all those garments of souls...** To enter and experience higher dimensions, the soul is enveloped in a radiant garment woven out of the good deeds performed by that person in this world. Parallels appear in Islamic and Iranian eschatology—and in Mahayana Buddhism, according to which the Buddha enjoys *sambhogakaya* ("a body of bliss"), generated by merit accrued over aeons.

Here Rabbi Abba states that the angels clothe the soul in her individual garment, which corresponds "to דיוקנא (*deyoqna*), the image, of this world." This last phrase associates the soul's garment with the צלם (*tselem*), "image," an ethereal body. Before entering a human body, each soul exists in the Garden of Eden, where she is clothed in this *tselem*, which resembles the physical body she will inhabit on earth.

On the soul's garment, see *Zohar* 1:66a, 82b, 224a–b, 226b, 233b; 2:98b, 150a, 229b, 231a, 247a (*Heikh*); 3:69a, 92a–b, 101a, 174b–175a, 214a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 404; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 56; Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 61; Scholem, *Shedim Ruḥot u-Nshamot*, 215–45; idem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 264–65; Nakamura Hajime, in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Eliade, 2:458. Cf. Matthew 22:1–14; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 36; *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:6; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:35; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 14.

On the ethereal body, see Naḥmanides on Genesis 49:33; *Zohar* 1:7a, 38b (*Heikh*), 81a (*ST*), 90b–91a, 115b (*MhN*), 131a, 217b, 219a, 220a, 224a–b, 227a–b, 233b; 2:11a, 13a–b, 96b, 141b, 150a, 156b–157a, 161b; 3:13a–b, 43a–b, 61b, 70b, 104a–b, 159b, 169b; *ZḤ* 10b–c (*MhN*), 90b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 390; idem, *Seder Gan Eden*, 133; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 158–59; idem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, 251–73; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:770–73. Cf. Rashi on BT *Ḥagigah* 12b, s.v. *ve-ruḥot u-nshamot*.

267. **This pertains to thirty days and afterward...** During the thirty days following death, even a soul destined for the Garden of Eden is punished for whatever sins were committed by the person on earth. In effect, she shares some of the punishment suffered by the corpse in the grave, known as *ḥibbut ha-qever* (beating in the grave), which is administered by the Angel of Death or other heavenly or demonic beings. See above, note 87.

"Those letters" refers to the initial letters of the four archangels, as described above at notes 261–64.

268. **That heaven revolves...** The heaven above the Garden of Eden revolves twice daily, remaining directly above the Garden. In the heaven are inscribed the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, which convey heavenly dew to bathe and nourish the souls. "Heaven" symbolizes *Tif'eret*, who is identified with Written Torah, composed of the

twenty-two letters. As mentioned above (note 258), heaven is fashioned from fire and water, both of which are associated with Torah. Those souls who engaged in Torah in this world "for its own sake" (that is, without ulterior motives) are rewarded with the nourishing dew conveyed by the letters of Torah. Furthermore, their own words of Torah are inscribed in the Garden and ascend to the heaven above the Garden.

On the heaven above the Garden, see above, note 258. On the connection between manna and dew, see Exodus 16:13–14; Numbers 11:9. On the soul being purified by dew, see *Zohar* 3:171a; *ZḤ* 53b.

269. **In the middle of this heaven is an opening…** A column reaches from the earthly Garden through this opening in the heaven above the Garden and extends to the heavenly Garden of Eden.

On the column in the middle of the Garden, see *Zohar* 1:39a–b (*Heikh*), 81a (*ST*), 219a; 2:130b, 184b, 211a; 3:185b; Moses de León, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 64a–b; idem, *Seder Gan Eden*, 132–35, 139–40; Idel, *Ascensions on High*, 101–42. Cf. *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:28). On earthly and heavenly Gardens of Eden, see Vol. 5, p. 373, n. 519.

270. **They are fashioned out of good deeds…** The soul's garment is woven out of the good deeds performed by that person during his lifetime on earth. See above, note 266.

271. **When the soul ascends…** Whereas in the earthly Garden of Eden the soul wears garments woven out good deeds ("those garments"), as she ascends to the heavenly Garden she finds even finer garments ("these garments"), fashioned from the pure intention of study and prayer in which she engaged during her time on earth. These heartfelt intentions had crowned *Shekhinah* Herself, with a portion of them remaining for the person who had studied and prayed so devoutly. The garments made out of these

intentions enable the soul to abide in the heavenly Garden among the angels.

"The Holy Lamp" is a title of Rabbi Shim'on. See above, p. 68, n. 38.

272. ***A river issues from Eden…*** The river watering the earthly Garden issues from Eden, but the precise location and true nature of this Eden remains concealed, because if it were revealed, then the site of the upper Eden (namely *Ḥokhmah*) would also become known.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads*. According to Kabbalah, the verse implies that a river of emanation (extending from *Binah* to *Yesod*) issues from *Ḥokhmah* to water *the garden* of *Shekhinah*. On upper and lower Eden, see *Zohar* 3:129b (*IR*), 182b; *ZḤ* 18a (*MhN*); cf. *ZḤ* 13c (*MhN*).

273. **As that river divides…** The earthly Garden is fed by the river and illumined by a heavenly light. Both the river and the light issue from Eden, which is the site of *Shekhinah* (the Lower Point); in a sense, *Shekhinah* "becomes Eden."

The four inscribed letters are the initial letters of the four archangels, as described above (at notes 261–64). The four lights and letters correspond to the *four riverheads* into which the river divides. See the full verse from Genesis in the preceding note and Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 138.

274. **This Lower Point is the Garden…** In relation to the earthly Garden, *Shekhinah* (the Lower Point) is Eden, the source of the river. However, in relation to Higher Eden (*Ḥokhmah*), *Shekhinah* is the Garden.

In the verse from Isaiah, the phrase אלהיט זולתך (*Elohim zulatekha*), *O God, but You*, can be interpreted in two ways. It may refer to *Shekhinah* (the Lower Point), who is often called *Elohim* and "who knows [and is even identified with] this Eden below." Alternatively, this divine name can signify

Ḥokhmah (Highest Eden), who generates *Binah*, known as "the World that is Coming." Since *Binah* too is often called *Elohim*, here the name may be applied to Her source, *Ḥokhmah*. The supernal *sefirah* of *Ḥokhmah* knows and joins *Shekhinah* by means of the river of *Yesod*, who is called Righteous One.

On the verse from Isaiah, see BT *Berakhot* 34b, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan: "All the prophets prophesied only concerning the days of the Messiah, but as for the world that is coming, *No eye has seen, O God, but You*, [*what You will do for one who awaits You*]." On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, p. 102, n. 126.

275. **בצחצחות (*be-tsaḥtsaḥot*), *in parched places, with radiancies…*** The simple meaning of the rare word צחצחות (*tsaḥtsaḥot*) is *parched places*, but here Rabbi Abba adds a new sense by dividing it into two words: צח צחות (*tsaḥ tsaḥot*), "thirsting for radiancies." Thus "this word can be interpreted both above and below": above, alluding to supernal radiance; below, referring to parching thirst. Both senses apply to a soul departing this world, who yearns for light.

The full verse in Isaiah 58 reads: *YHVH will guide you always; He will satisfy* נפשך (*nafshekha*), *your thirst* [or: *soul*], בצחצחות (*be-tsaḥtsaḥot*), *in parched regions, and invigorate your bones. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters do not fail*. See *Zohar* 1:113b–114a (*MhN*), 141a, 224b; 2:97a, 142b, 209a.

276. **Were it not for that garment…** The soul's garment, woven out of the good deeds performed during her time on earth, enables her to endure the brilliance in the Garden. On the garment, see above, note 266.

277. **That river above…** The river of *Yesod* streams souls into *Shekhinah* (the supernal Garden), who then gives birth to them, conveying them into physical bodies on earth. After departing from this world, the souls are refined and calmed by the "river below" in the earthly Garden. Here on earth, a troubled person is often able to calm his soul by

sitting by a river, since this recalls his soul's origin in the river of *Yesod*.

278. **One column…** Souls who are worthy and have been purified ascend through the column in the middle of the earthly Garden to the heavenly Garden. Inside the column is a *glow*, while *cloud* and *smoke* conceal the column and the souls within it from those souls remaining in the Garden below.

On the column joining the earthly and the heavenly Gardens, see above, note 269. The verse in Isaiah reads: *YHVH will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day and smoke with a glow of flaming fire by night*.

279. **When the blessed Holy One wishes to be arrayed…** On these special occasions, God "sends four faces of the eagle," referring to the vision of Ezekiel, which featured four חיות (*ḥayyot*), angelic "living beings," carrying the heavenly throne, each of whom had four faces: a human face at the front, the face of a lion on the right, the face of an ox on the left, and the face of an eagle at the back. Here, the four eagle faces stand above a palace in the earthly Garden called *Deror* (Freedom), which is associated with one of the ingredients of the anointing oil: מר דרור (*mor deror*), *congealed myrrh*. The four faces summon worthy souls and conduct them into the column to ascend to the heavenly Garden.

On the proclamation of *deror* (freedom) in the Jubilee years, see Leviticus 25:10: *You shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim* דרור (*deror*), *freedom* [or: *a release*], *in the land to all of its inhabitants. A jubilee it shall be for you, and you shall go back each man to his holding and each man to his clan, you shall go back*.

280. ***site of Mount Zion* and *her assemblies…*** *Shekhinah* (the Lower Point) is pictured as *site of Mount Zion*. On special occasions She is adorned by souls

of the righteous, who are called and assembled by Her. For the verse in Isaiah, see above, note 278.

281. **Once these souls ascend…** Through the column. In the second sentence, the subject "all those souls" apparently refers to those souls who remain below in the earthly Garden. The other souls, who ascend, eventually reach the circle surrounding *Shekhinah* (the Point). On the sweet sound of the heaven's revolving, see above, note 23.

282. **She desires them…** *Shekhinah* desires the souls of the righteous, having been adorned by them. Their intimacy arouses the jealousy of *Yesod* (known as Righteous One), who gazes at the beauty of *Shekhinah* (the Point) and then grasps Her.

See *Zohar* 1:66b, where the intimacy between a righteous man and *Shekhinah* arouses the jealousy of the divine male. On the obligation to be jealous of one's wife, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 21; BT *Sotah* 3a. On the essential role of jealousy in love, see *Zohar* 1:245a; 3:54b. On the metaphor of being clothed in jealousy, see Isaiah 59:17.

283. **light shines into light…** The light of *Yesod* joins the light of *Shekhinah*. On the verse in Isaiah, see BT *Berakhot* 34b, quoted above, note 274.

284. ***An image above the heads…*** Ezekiel's description of *an expanse* that lies *above the heads of the living being* can be interpreted in two ways. There is an "expanse below" (namely *Yesod*), which "stands over the four living beings" within the realm of *Shekhinah*. From this expanse of *Yesod* "extends a form of a certain female behind a male," namely *Shekhinah* behind the divine male. She is also pictured as the divine *back* seen by Moses. Together the divine male and female form an androgynous unit, alluded to by the verse in Psalms and the two *sides* mentioned in Genesis. The androgynous human being was fashioned in the image of the androgynous divine being.

See *Midrash Tehillim* 139:5: "*Behind and in front You formed me*. What is *behind and in front*? They were created

[as a single creature] with two faces. So it was with Adam: behind him was the form of Eve—as is said: *YHVH Elohim built the side* [*He had taken from the human into a woman*] (Genesis 2:22)."

The verse in Psalms reads: *Behind and in front* צרתני (*tsartani*)—apparently meaning *You besieged* [or: *encompassed*] *me*. However, rabbinic sources understand the root צור (*tsur*) as a by-form of יצר (*ytsr*), "to form." See Vol. 4, p. 285, n. 306.

The context in Genesis (2:21–22) reads: *YHVH Elohim cast a deep slumber on the human, and he slept, and He took one* מצלעותיו (*mi-tsal'otav*), *of his ribs* [or: *sides*], *and closed the flesh in its place. YHVH Elohim built the rib* [or: *side*] *He had taken from the human into a woman and He brought her to the human*. According to a midrashic tradition, God divided the original androgynous human into two halves: male and female.

On צלע (*tsela*) as *side*, see Exodus 26:20: ולצלע (*ul-tsela*), *and on the side of, the Tabernacle*. See Exodus 25:12; 2 Samuel 6:13; *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1; Rashi and Ibn Ezra on Genesis 2:21.

On the androgynous nature of the original human being, see Plato, *Symposium* 189d–191d; *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 14:1; BT *Berakhot* 61a, *Eruvin* 18a; *Tanḥuma, Tazri'a* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tazri'a* 2; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1355–56.

In the verse in Ezekiel the noun חיה (*ḥayyah*), *living being* (or "animal, creature"), appears in the singular, apparently to emphasize the unity of the ensemble of four living beings. See Greenberg, *Ezekiel*, 48.

"Expanse" renders רקיע (*raqi'a*), "expanse, firmament, heaven." See above, note 253. The full verse in Exodus reads: *I will take away My palm and you will see My back, but My face will not be seen*.

285. **The expanse above…** This higher expanse is *Binah*, who presides over four "supernal living beings,"

namely the four *sefirot Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Shekhinah*. The form of the divine male begins at *Binah* and extends through *Yesod*, the expanse below. This entire male configuration (whose core is *Tif'eret*) is known as *the heavens. Yesod* is one *end of the heavens*, while *Binah* is *from the end of the heavens*, since *from* Her the entire configuration of *the heavens* begins.

The verse in Deuteronomy refers to God redeeming Israel from Egypt and revealing Himself to them at Mount Sinai. It reads in full: *For ask now of primal days that were before you, from the day God created a human on the earth and from the end of the heavens to the end of the heavens, has anything as great as this ever happened or has its like been heard?* See *Zohar* 1:1b, 15b; 2:137a, 200a, 232a; Vol. 4, p. 530–31, n. 598.

286. ***The heads of the living being* below...** These are four living beings seen by Ezekiel, who stand above the "four inscribed letters," namely the initial letters of the four archangels (as described above at notes 261–64).

If Eden exists below on earth, how can these heavenly living beings appear there? Rabbi Abba explains that *Shekhinah* (the Point) has a portion in the sefirotic realm and also a portion below on earth, consisting of the Garden, which thus invites the presence of heavenly beings. There *Shekhinah* delights in the souls of the righteous, whereas above She delights in *Yesod*, the Righteous One. Since these souls issue from *Yesod*, Her delight both above and below is based on the Righteous One. The earthly Garden is fed by *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as Eden.

On *Shekhinah* being intimate with the righteous below and the Righteous One above, see *Zohar* 1:153b, 155a–b, 245b. Cf. above, note 282. On *Shekhinah* as Eden, see above, notes 272–74.

287. **Those *heads of the living being*...** In Ezekiel's vision each of the four living beings carrying the heavenly throne had four faces: a human face at the front, the face of

a lion on the right, the face of an ox on the left, and the face of an eagle at the back.

On the singular wording *the living being*, see above, toward the end of note 284. Ezekiel 1:10 reads in full: *The image of their face was a human face, and on the right the four of them had a lion's face, and on the left the four of them had an ox's face, and the four of them had an eagle's face*. The peculiar formulation of the verse reflects the sequence of observation. The onlooker (on any side) was confronted by a human face, flanked by two animal faces on its right and left. Finally, from what could be seen on the heads of the rest of the creatures, the onlooker inferred that in back of the human face confronting him was an eagle's face. See Greenberg, *Ezekiel*, 45.

On the all-inclusive nature of "the human," see *Zohar* 1:18b–19a, 44a (*Heikh*); 2:73a (*RR*), 74a, 80b, 178a (*SdTs*); 3:48a–b.

288. **These are four riverheads...** The four living beings are identified with the four riverheads described in Genesis 2:10: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four river-heads*. See above, notes 272–73.

On the River of Fire formed from the sweat of the angelic beings carrying the Throne, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 78:1; *Eikhah Rabbah* 3:8; BT *Ḥagigah* 13b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4. Cf. Vol. 5, p. 319, n. 361.

289. **When souls ascend...** They are purified in the River of Fire and offered up as sacrifices—not consumed but bathed and cleansed in fire. According to legend, a salamander is born from fire, so its hide is fireproof and can be cleansed only in fire. Similarly, a soul, which issues from the fiery Throne (symbolizing *Shekhinah*), can be cleansed only in the River of Fire.

On the souls of the righteous being offered as sacrifices (by the archangel Michael, the celestial high priest), see *Araqim*, in *Otsar Midrashim*, ed. Eisenstein, 1:70a (cf. *Otsar*

Midrashim, 1:104a; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 5:63); *Tosafot* on *Menaḥot* 110a, s.v. *u-Mikha'el*; *Zohar* 1:80a (*ST*), 81a (*ST*); 2:37b, 247a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*), 24b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 137; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 114–16. Cf. *Zohar* 2:119b (*RM*), 213b; 3:29b (*RM*).

On purification in the River of Fire, see *Zohar* 1:201a, 217b; 2:247a (*Heikh*); 3:159b, 205a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 373–74; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 54–55, 68–70; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 60 (74–75).

On the salamander's origin, see *Sifra, Shemini, sheratsim* 5:7, 52b; BT *Ḥagigah* 27a (and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *salamandera*); *Ḥullin* 127a; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 3; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:28; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 54–55; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:52, nn. 157–58. Cf. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 5:19; Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 10:86; 29:23; BT *Sanhedrin* 63b.

On the soul issuing from the Divine Throne, see *Zohar* 1:113a, 125b, 126b; *ZḤ* 10b–c (all *MhN*)). The full verse in Daniel reads: *As I watched, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece, His throne flames of fire, its wheels blazing fire*.

290. **If so, by this the soul is not punished…** If she is simply cleansed and purified.

291. **once she has received punishment in the body…** The soul shares some of the punishment suffered by the corpse in the grave, known as *ḥibbut ha-qever* (beating in the grave). See above, notes 87, 267.

A soul that needs purification by fire is then brought to a special place in Hell called Ben-hinnom. This name derives from גיא בן-הנם (*gei ven-hinnom*), "the Valley of Benhinnom [the son of Hinnom]," south of Jerusalem, where child sacrifices were supposedly offered to Molech. This valley also served for the incineration of the city's refuse and the dumping of animal carcasses and the bodies of criminals. Jeremiah prophesied that the valley would

become *the Valley of Slaughter* and a burial place (Jeremiah 7:32). In post-biblical literature it assumed the connotation of Hell, where the wicked are punished. Here, Ben-hinnom serves as a purgatory, so that souls can be cleansed in fire and afterward enter the Garden of Eden. Rabbi Abba playfully links the name הנם (*hinnom*) with הנם (*hinnam*), "Here they are!"

292. **the trauma of lower fire…** Which descends from the River of Fire above. On this river, see above, notes 288–89.

293. **The second time…** After being purged in Ben-hinnom the soul enters the Garden of Eden, but in order to ascend to the heavenly Garden she must be cleansed further of any mundane vestige by passing through the River of Fire.

On the garments worn by the soul in the heavenly Garden, see above, note 271; cf. note 266.

294. **Those souls in the Garden of Eden below…** Who are not yet privileged to ascend to the celestial Garden. On special occasions they draw near heavenly Jerusalem, the realm of *Shekhinah*, who sustains the heavenly Garden.

On the walls of heavenly Jerusalem, guarded by angels, see *Zohar* 1:80b–81a (*ST*); 2:89b.

295. **Emerging from there…** Emerging from the earthly Garden, these souls roam the world and witness the punishment of the bodies of the wicked.

"Those who suffer for the unification of their Lord" are the martyrs who die for the sanctification of God's name. The Messiah resides in the earthly the Garden of Eden. On the verse in Isaiah, cf. *Zohar* 2:151a.

296. **When they tell the Messiah…** Dwelling in the earthly Garden, he weeps over the wicked and takes upon himself the suffering intended for Israel on account of their neglect and violation of Torah.

According to BT *Bava Metsi'a* 84b, Rabbi El'azar son of Rabbi Shim'on welcomed his suffering by saying "Come, my brothers and companions!" As an official responsible for apprehending thieves and robbers for the Roman administration, Rabbi El'azar feared that he had ensnared someone unjustly and he saw his suffering as penance.

The context in Isaiah (53:4–5) reads: *Yet it was our sickness that he was bearing, our pains that he endured—though we considered him plagued, stricken by God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our sins, crushed for our iniquities; he bore the chastisement that made us whole, and by his bruises we were healed*. This chapter of Isaiah, of course, was interpreted in Christianity as referring to Jesus. Naḥmanides argued against such a Messianic interpretation, yet here the *Zohar* adopts it. See Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 191, n. 209. On the Messiah suffering for Israel, see *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:29). Cf. BT *Sanhedrin* 98a.

297. **For innumerable are the sufferings…** For the neglect and violation of Torah, a person deserves much suffering, which was ordained when the Torah was revealed at Sinai.

See *Avot* 6:2, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi: "Every single day an echo resounds from Mount Horeb [Sinai], proclaiming: 'Woe to creatures for the humiliation of Torah!'"

298. **The Holy Point wishes to delight…** *Shekhinah* wishes to delight in the heavenly Garden above with souls of the righteous. When She wants to delight in the earthly Garden below with souls of the righteous who are still in this world, She does so at midnight when those souls ascend. See above, notes 14, 248.

299. **The heaven that we have mentioned…** The heaven over the earthly Garden presides over four angelic heads, whose initial letters sparkle. See above at notes 261–64.

300. **The heaven of that Point…** Correspondingly, a higher heaven, of *Shekhinah*, presides over four higher angelic beings. She nourishes all the angels.

301. **One opening is marked to the east…** The letter sparkling in this opening is the first letter of the name אדני (*Adonai*), associated with *Shekhinah*.

302. **The second opening is marked to the north…** The letter sometimes sparkling here is the second letter of אדני (*Adonai*). Its inconstancy derives from the quality of *Din* (harsh Judgment), which is associated with the north.

303. **The third opening…** Here shines the third letter of אדני (*Adonai*).

304. **The fourth opening…** Here is the final letter of אדני (*Adonai*), so small that it is sometimes invisible.

305. **In this heaven other letters are inscribed…** The twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The heaven revolves by the power of letters—specifically the four pairs of letters א״ט ב״ח ג״ז ד״ו (*alef, tet*; *bet, ḥet*; *gimel, zayin*; *dalet, vav*). The numerical value of each of these pairs is ten, the "enumeration of unity," alluding to the ten *sefirot*, which express divine unity. Above these four pairs are "other supernal letters," namely the alphabet within the realm of *Binah*.

On the higher alphabet of *Binah*, see above, p. 8, n. 22.

306. **four mysteries of Holy Names…** Permutations of the name יהוה (*YHVH*) and/or other divine names, combined with thirty-two letters corresponding to the thirty-two paths of Wisdom, mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1–2. The heavenly dew descending by the holy letters nourishes all the angels.

For various interpretations of the specific permutations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

307. **When Judgment impends…** Then the first letters of each of the four pairs א״ט ב״ח ג״ז ד״ו (*alef, tet*; *bet, ḥet*; *gimel, zayin*; *dalet, vav*)—namely א ב ג ד (*alef, bet, gimel, dalet*)—are concealed within the second letters: ט ח ז ו (*tet, ḥet, zayin, vav*). The reverse order of these second letters (progressing from

later in the alphabet toward the beginning) alludes to Judgment, which is also symbolized by the direction north.

On letters in reverse indicating Judgment, see *Zohar* 2:51b–52a; *ZḤ* 83b (*MhN, Rut*).

308. **When this heaven moves...** Four angelic heads move as well. The four letters are apparently the letters of אדני (*Adonai*), associated with *Shekhinah*, "the one who ascends" to unite with *Tif'eret*. Now the four pairs of letters reappear completely. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

309. **When this heaven is restored...** Then all the angels roar, and *Shekhinah* ("the one who absorbs") obtains and provides their nourishment.

310. **Letters revolve and rotate...** All four pairs of letters—א״ט ב״ח ג״ז ד״ו (*alef, tet*; *bet, ḥet*; *gimel, zayin*; *dalet, vav*)—revolve, stimulating the revolution of the heaven. Then the letter י (*yod*) appears—whose numerical value equals the sum of each of the four pairs—followed by the three other letters of the name יהוה (*YHVH*).

311. **These letters sparkle...** The twelve flashes correspond to twelve permutations of the name יהוה (*YHVH*). Then *Shekhinah* ("the one who descends") descends into these letters.

312. **This heaven moves a second time...** Now the letters א״ט ב״ח ג״ז ד״ו (*alef, tet*; *bet, ḥet*; *gimel, zayin*; *dalet, vav*) are included in "the supernal letters" יהוה (*YHVH*).

On the verse in Ezekiel, see BT *Ḥagigah* 13b: *"Blessed be the glory of YHVH from His place!*—implying that no one knows His place." See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4; *Bahir* 90 (131); *Zohar* 1:103a; 3:159a. "The side of the Countenance" may refer to *Tif'eret*. See above, note 260.

313. **These letters that we have mentioned...** The Name יהוה (*YHVH*) pertains below (in the realm of *Shekhinah*) and above (signifying *Tif'eret*). When pertaining below, the letters of יהוה (*YHVH*) ascend in the heaven of *Shekhinah* and receive the letter ו (*vav*), descending from *Tif'eret*, thus

forming the word ויהוה (*Va-YHVH*), "And *YHVH*." This compound name of five letters alludes to the union of *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the *vav*) and *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *YHVH*). Thus it is complete, but not as complete as the nine-letter name יהוה אלהים (*YHVH Elohim*), which signifies the consummate union of *Tif'eret* (here symbolized by *YHVH*) and *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *Elohim*).

On the significance of ויהוה (*Va-YHVH*), "And *YHVH*," see *Bereshit Rabbah* 51:2, in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Wherever it is said *And YHVH*, this implies: He and His court." In Kabbalah this court symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who derives from *Din* (Judgment) and pronounces the divine decree, so the phrase *And YHVH* encompasses "He [the divine male, known as *YHVH*] and His court [*Shekhinah*]." Here, however, Rabbi Abba reverses the roles: *YHVH* signifies *Shekhinah*, while the *vav* signifies *Tif'eret*. (The numerical value of *vav*, six, corresponds to the sextet of *Tif'eret* and the five *sefirot* surrounding Him, from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*.)

See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:2; JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 16; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Va'era* 21; *Shemot Rabbah* 12:4; Rashi on Exodus 12:29; *Zohar* 1:15b, 64b, 105a, 107b, 159b, 192b, 198a, 240a; 2:37b, 46a, 149a, 227b; 3:9b, 149a. The hermeneutical significance of *va* (*and*) was championed by Rabbi Akiva. See BT *Yevamot* 68b, *Sanhedrin* 51b.

On *YHVH Elohim* as the "complete name," see *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:3; cf. 12:15.

314. **Once these letters unite...** The letters of ויהוה (*Va-YHVH*), "And *YHVH*." The number thirty-two corresponds to the thirty-two paths of Wisdom, mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1–2. See above, note 306.

315. **In this heaven, to the north...** The direction signifying *Gevurah*, who is symbolized by fire and is located on the left side. The subject of "It is inscribed" is the heaven.

On ten divine names, see Vol. 5, pp. 416–17, n. 648. On seventy divine names, see *Targum*, Song of Songs 2:17; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:12; Naḥmanides, *Kitvei Ramban*, 1:135; *Zohar* 1:5b; 2:51b, 123a, 160b; 3:223b (*RM*), 263a; Idel, "Olam ha-Mal'akhim bi-Dmut Adam," 12–13. For various lists of these names, see *Alfa Beita de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:350–51); *Shir ha-Shirim Zuta* 1:1; *Aggadat Shir ha-Shirim*, ed. Schechter, on 1:1, pp. 9–10; *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 46:8; *Ba'al ha-Turim* on Numbers 11:16.

316. **By this heaven are conveyed all heavens below...** The heaven of *Shekhinah* stimulates and impels all the holy heavens (or powers) below, symbolized by the *curtains of the Dwelling*. Beneath these heavens are impure heavens (or powers), symbolized by *curtains* [or: *panels, strips*] *of goat hair*.

The covering of the Dwelling (Tabernacle) comprised four separate layers: linen, goat hair, ram skins, and, uppermost, leather. The term עזים (*izzim*), "goat hair, goats," suggests שעיר (*sa'ir*), "goat, demon, satyr," and the scapegoat sent to the demon Azazel (Leviticus 16). The goat hair covering the linen symbolizes powers outside the divine realm that protect the inner, holy powers. These demonic powers stimulate sensual craving.

The phrase "for this Name below" refers to the name *YHVH* pertaining to *Shekhinah*. See above, note 313. "A thin membrane" is a conjectural rendering of קלישו דקסרא (*qelishu de-qisra*). The root קלש (*qlsh*) means "to reduce, make thin." Elsewhere in the *Zohar* the neologism קיסרא (*qisra*) or its variants seem to refer to various kinds of containers, such as "cage, castle, bottle." See Vol. 2, p. 260, n.15; Vol. 3, p. 325, n. 130; p. 481, n. 825; Vol. 4, p. 129, n. 220. Cf. Vol. 3, p. 196, n. 110; Vol. 4, p. 418, n. 177; Vol. 5, p. 571, n. 63.

On the goat hair, see *Zohar* 2:139a, 147b, 233a–b. On the demonic nature of עז (*ez*), "goat," see *Zohar* 2:185a; 3:25a, 41b. On *sa'ir*, see *Sifra, Aḥarei Mot* 9:8; *Sifrei*,

Deuteronomy 306; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:2; *Bereshit Rabbah* 36:1; 65:15; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 5:1; 22:8; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 17:7; *Zohar* 1:65a, 138b, 145b, 153a; 3:64a; above, p. 41, n. 105.

On the *curtains of the Dwelling*, see above, notes 249–50. On the image of shell and kernel, see above, note 144. On the phrase *heavens for YHVH*, see above, note 249.

317. **There are other heavens above…** Namely, the *sefirot Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Shekhinah*, who are pictured as "supernal living beings" and signified by the higher aspect of the name *YHVH*, which is associated with *Tif'eret*, the central *sefirah* of this quartet. *Tif'eret* is also pictured as Written Torah, whose twenty-two alphabetical letters issue from *Binah*, the eighth *sefirah* (counting from *Shekhinah* below) or "supreme eighth heaven." She is the source of all colors and lights, yet She Herself is colorless and invisible—although souls of the righteous catch a glimpse of Her radiance from "the lower heaven" of *Shekhinah*, in which they abide.

On seeing from behind a wall, see Maimonides, *Shemonah Peraqim*, 7; *Zohar* 1:232b (*Tos*) (Vol. 3, p. 405, n. 509); 2:69a–b, 82a, 130b; 3:174b; *ZḤ* 15c (*MhN*), 39d.

318. **Below this…** Below the heaven of *Shekhinah* all Her various powers are included in the name *heavens*, while the powers of *Tif'eret* (who is known by the Name *YHVH*) are called *the heavens*. Now Rabbi Abba reads the verse in Psalms as referring to a sefirotic spectrum: *The heavens* (*Tif'eret* together with the *sefirot* surrounding Him), (*are*) *heavens* (*Shekhinah* together with Her powers), *for YHVH* (for *Binah*, who is "the supreme heaven presiding over them").

On the verse in Psalms, see above, note 249. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. *As Miqdash Melekh* notes, this interpretation of *for YHVH* conflicts with the one above at note 316.

319. **Until here, a hint of the Holy Name…** Until the realm of *Binah*, one finds a hint of the Name *YHVH*—specifically

in the verse *The heavens are heavens for* *YHVH*. Beyond *Binah*, no one fathoms, except for a "slight gleam" that quickly disappears.

320. **one who enters and emerges...** This phrase derives from the famous description of four rabbis who "entered the orchard," that is, who engaged in mystical contemplation of the divine realm. Only Rabbi Akiva "entered in peace and emerged in peace." In the *Zohar*, "one who enters and emerges" refers to a kabbalist who enters the realm of mystery and emerges unscathed, one who plumbs the secrets and applies them.

See JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4 (and cf. *Tosefta Ḥagigah* 2:4; BT *Ḥagigah* 14b); Vol. 5, pp. 531–32, n. 980.

321. **When one worships...** One should unite the lower heavens beneath *Shekhinah* and the upper heavens of *Tif'eret*, joining them all to *Binah*, the "supernal heaven presiding over them."

The expression "like a flame to a burning coal" derives from *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:7: "like a flame bound to a burning coal."

"One name below" may refer to אדני (*Adonai*) or the aspect of יהוה (*YHVH*) pertaining to *Shekhinah*. See above, notes 301–4, 313.

322. **While his mouth and lips are moving...** During prayer one should gradually unite all the *sefirot* in their ultimate source, *Ein Sof*. The phrase "supernal days" refers to the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Shekhinah*.

323. **At night...** Sleep resembles death, so in preparation one should consciously entrust his soul to God.

See BT *Berakhot* 57b: "Sleep is one-sixtieth of death." See *Zohar* 1:36a–b, 53b, 169b, 184b, 207a; 2:173a, 195b, 215b; 3:119a, 120b, 156b, 234b, 260a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 52–53.

324. **This lower heaven...** The heaven of *Shekhinah* abides within Her. She includes the *sefirot* above and the

souls of the righteous below. Her base, or foundation, is in the world below, since the virtuous acts of human beings on earth stimulate Her union with *Tif'eret*. This can be compared to a lamp. The darker light at the bottom of the flame symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who joins with *Tif'eret*, the white light. Their union is based on the wick (symbolizing Israel), drenched in the oil of good deeds.

The phrase "similarly below" refers to *Shekhinah*, lowest of the *sefirot*. During the day She unites with *Tif'eret*, whereas at night She gathers the souls of the righteous. On the image of the lamp, see *Zohar* 1:50b–51a.

325. **All things of the world return...** Each night all things return to their source. The soul returns to the realm of *Shekhinah*, while the body returns to the demonic realm. When one awakens in the morning, the impurity of the Other Side remains only on the hands, which must therefore be washed immediately.

The phrase "the one who is crowned" refers to *Shekhinah*. On the spirit of impurity and the sleeping body, see BT *Shabbat* 109a, *Ḥullin* 107b; *Zohar* 1:10b, 53b, 83a, 130a, 169b, 184b; Moses de León, *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, par. 10.

The verse in Psalms reads: *I bless YHVH who counsels me; even in the nights* כליותי (*khilyotai*), *my kidneys, admonish me*. The kidneys were thought to be the seat of emotion and conscience. Here, Rabbi Abba apparently reads the verse as: *Even the nights admonish me, my innards* [or: *kidneys*].

326. **At night rule princes...** Angels bring the souls as offerings to God. By smelling each soul, Surya determines whether she reveres God or not, just as the Messiah will one day determine people's character in order to judge them. Then Surya entrusts them to *Shekhinah* for the duration of the night and they are offered up. All the souls are absorbed within Her.

See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:829. On souls being offered as sacrifices, see above, note 289. On the angel Surya, see Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, §§ 117–

20, 219; Rabbinovicz, *Diqduqei Soferim, Berakhot* 51a, p. 270, n. 100; *Zohar* 2:154a, 253a (*Heikh*); Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 144–46.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *His scenting will be by the awe of YHVH; not by the sight of his eyes will he judge, nor by the hearing of his ears will he decide*. See *Zohar* 2:78a; BT *Sanhedrin* 93b.

327. **for masters of qualities...** For those who have mastered the divine qualities, the *sefirot*. Cf. Vol. 5, p. 216, n. 76.

When *Shekhinah* conceives at night, She revels in the delight of the devout deeds performed on earth that day by this soul. Then She is completed "from all sides," from above by *Tif'eret* and from below by the soul.

328. **Afterward She brings them forth...** Each morning *Shekhinah* gives birth to the soul anew, as when the soul originally emerged from *Shekhinah*.

Shekhinah is known as *faithfulness* since She acts faithfully, for example, by restoring the soul to the body each morning. She is *great* because She is able to contain countless souls by night. After She gives birth to these souls again in the morning, She unites with *Tif'eret* and receives new souls.

On the verse in Lamentations, see *Zohar* 1:19a–b; *ZḤ* 18b (*MhN*). Cf. BT *Ḥagigah* 14a, where the verse is applied to angels who are born daily.

329. **Let him who began conclude the praise!...** Since Rabbi Abba began expounding Torah, he should continue, thereby glorifying God. For the beginning of Rabbi Abba's teaching, see above at note 249. On words of Torah adorning God, cf. above, note 247.

330. **the Holy Lamp...** Rabbi Shim'on. On this title, see above p. 68, n. 38.

331. **This ark is a mystery...** The ark in the Dwelling (or Tabernacle) symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is entered by *Tif'eret* (symbolized by Written Torah). The ark is constructed

of six boards—four on its four sides, plus top and bottom—symbolizing six aspects or powers of *Shekhinah*. These six conceal Written Torah, which also consists of six aspects, namely all six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*.

On *Shekhinah* as the "ark," see *Zohar* 1:2a, 33b, 50b, 59b, 228b, 251a; 2:13a, 235b, 259a–b (*Heikh*); 3:199a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 75 (95).

332. **Those boards are five...** The כפורת (*kapporet*), "purging cover," over the ark constitutes its top, so the top board of the ark is excluded from the total number of boards, leaving five (on the four sides and bottom of the ark). This ark of five boards (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) is entered by the five books of Written Torah, symbolizing the five *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Hod*. The sixth sefirotic rung is *Yesod* (the divine phallus, symbolized by the covenant of circumcision), who conveys the entire flow to *Shekhinah*. When *Yesod* enters the boards, the divine couple unite, a union symbolized by the nine-letter double name יהוה אלהים (*YHVH Elohim*). Above them prevails the expanse of *Binah*, who covers and conceals all the lower *sefirot*.

On the name *YHVH Elohim*, see above, note 313. On the expanse of *Binah*, see above, note 285.

333. **There is an ark...** Opposite the holy ark (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) is a demonic ark.

334. ***All of it has Araunah the king...*** According to this chapter of the book of Samuel, King David conducted a census, which was considered sinful, and God punished Israel with a plague. In order to stop the plague, David was instructed to build an altar on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite (the future site of the Temple). David sought to buy the threshing floor from Araunah, who responded by offering David oxen and wood for free (though not the land). However, David insisted on paying for both the oxen and the threshing floor itself.

Here Rabbi Abba wonders why Araunah is called *the king*—a peculiar designation that has also perplexed biblical

scholars. Rabbi Abba mentions the fact that “the Companions” have interpreted this term, which may refer to the tradition cited by Rashi that Araunah was a Jebusite officer. Before exploring the royal identity of Araunah any further, Rabbi Abba asks why King David had to purchase the threshing floor from Araunah the Jebusite, since David had already conquered Jerusalem from the Jebusites, as indicated in 2 Samuel 5:6–10.

On Araunah’s official status, see Rashi on 2 Samuel 24:16, 23; David Kimḥi on 2 Samuel 24:23.

335. **Although Jerusalem belonged to David…** Still, the threshing floor originally belonged to Araunah and King David had to request purchasing it, as, generations later, King Ahab approached Naboth the Jezreelite, seeking to purchase (or trade for) the latter’s vineyard, which adjoined the royal palace. See 1 Kings 21.

336. **When the time came…** When it was time for Araunah’s threshing floor to become the site of the Temple, this was accomplished only through the death of thousands of Israelites. As the Angel of Destruction was standing at Araunah’s threshing floor, David arranged to offer sacrifices and the destructive plague ceased. See 2 Samuel 24:15–25; 1 Chronicles 21:14–27.

337. **place where Isaac was bound…** According to Genesis 22:2, Abraham was commanded by God to offer up Isaac on a mountain in *the land of Moriah*. This mountain is traditionally identified with the Temple mount in Jerusalem.

The full verse in Chronicles reads: *God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it, but as he was about to wreak destruction,* YHVH *saw and regretted the evil and said to the destroying angel, “Enough! Now, stay your hand!” The angel of* YHVH *was then standing by the threshing floor of Oman the Jebusite*. According to a midrashic tradition attributed to Shemu’el (BT *Berakhot* 62b), the clause YHVH *saw* means “He saw the ashes of Isaac,” who was nearly

offered up by Abraham and replaced at the last minute by a ram.

According to a midrashic reading attributed to Rabbi El'azar (BT *Berakhot* 62b), the word רב (*rav*), *Enough!* means *great one*: "The blessed Holy One said to the angel, 'Take for Me *a great one* among them, through whom many sins can be requited for them.'" (The *great one* turns out to be Abishai son of Zeruiah.) Here, Rabbi Abba offers a different interpretation of *rav*, based on its meaning in the verse in Deuteronomy: *long enough*. God is saying that this land has remained *long enough* in the possession of the Jebusite Araunah (also known as Ornan), who symbolizes the demonic Other Side, represented here by the *destroying angel*. "Money" refers to the money that King David paid to Araunah for the threshing floor.

On the midrashic reading of *rav*, see *Zohar* 2:53a. On Mount Moriah as the site of the Temple, see 2 Chronicles 3:1; Jubilees 18:13; *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Genesis 22:14; JT *Berakhot* 4:5, 8c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 55:7; BT *Ta'anit* 16a, *Zevaḥim* 62a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:4; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 31; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 39, 165b; 40, 170a; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:2.

338. **ארונה (*Aravnah*), *Araunah*...ארנן (*Arnan*), *Ornan*...** Why does his name appear in different forms? Rabbi Abba explains that the name ארונה (*Aravnah*), *Araunah*, indicates his connection with the demonic ארון (*aron*), Ark, of the Other Side. The extra letter ה (*he*) actually signifies a diminution, since when a demonic entity is "given extra letters" it is thereby impaired.

As an example, Rabbi Abba mentions the covering of the Dwelling (or Tabernacle), which comprised four separate layers: linen, goat hair, ram skins, and, uppermost, leather. The term עזים (*izzim*), "goat hair, goats," suggests שעיר (*sa'ir*), "goat, demon, satyr," and the scapegoat sent to the demon Azazel (Leviticus 16). The goat hair covering the linen symbolizes demonic powers outside the divine realm

that protect the inner, holy powers. Rabbi Abba focuses on the number of *curtains* (or *panels, strips*) of goat hair specified in Exodus: עשתי עשרה (*ashtei esreh*), *eleven*. The letter ע (*ayin*), which begins the number עשתי עשרה (*ashtei esreh*), *eleven*, turns שתי עשרה (*shetei esreh*), "twelve," into *ashtei esreh, eleven*. This reduction (by an additional letter) befits the demonic realm, which is characterized by lack and deficiency. Rabbi Abba plays on the name of the letter ע (*ayin*) and the word עין (*ayin*), "eye," as in "the evil-eyed one."

Conversely, in the realm of Holiness, fewer letters actually signify an addition. As an example, Rabbi Abba refers to the large bronze reservoir built by Solomon in the Temple, which rested on twelve bronze oxen, three facing outward in each direction. This reservoir symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is arrayed by twelve angelic forces beneath Her. Here the abbreviated spelling שני עשר (*shenei asar*), *twelve*—rather than the full spelling שנים עשר (*sheneim asar*)—indicates the full holiness of *Shekhinah*.

See *Zohar* 2:164b. On עשתי עשרה (*ashtei esreh*), "eleven," and שתי עשרה (*shetei esreh*)—or שתי עשר (*shetei asar*)—"twelve," see also BT *Sanhedrin* 29a, where Rav Ashi cites *ashtei esreh* as an example of the maxim "Whoever increases, decreases." See, as well, Ibn Ezra on Numbers 7:72; Parḥon, *Maḥberet he-Arukh*, s.v. '*sht*; *Zohar* 2:233b. On the goat hair, see above, note 316.

On the reservoir in the Temple (called a *sea*), see *Zohar* 1:154a, 241a; 2:164b. The context in 1 Kings (7:23, 25) reads: *He made the sea of cast metal.... standing upon twelve oxen: three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east, with the sea set upon them above*.

339. **This side of Holiness...** *Shekhinah* is symbolized by the Ark, which contains the Covenant, symbolizing *Yesod*. This divine ארון (*aron*), "ark," is an appropriate container for the divine male body, the archetype of the human form.

Correspondingly, pious humans are buried in an *aron*, "a coffin."

Conversely, the demonic Other Side is bodiless and also has no share in the divine body. Rabbi Abba is alluding here to the midrashic treatment of Genesis 2:3: *God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, for on it He ceased from all His work that God had created* לעשות (*la-'asot*), *to make*. See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 17: "It is not written here: [*He ceased from all His work*] *that* [*God*] *had created and made*, but rather [*that God had created*] *to make*, for the Sabbath came first and their work [i.e., *all His work* of Creation] was not completed. Rabbi Benaya said, 'This refers to the demons, for He created their souls, and as He was creating their bodies, the Sabbath day was hallowed. He left them, and they remained soul without body.'"

See above, note 142. On the demonic force being excluded from the category of human, see *Zohar* 1:6b.

On *Shekhinah* and *Yesod* as Ark and Covenant, see above, notes 331–32. On being buried in a coffin, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:8.

340. **Of Joseph, what is written?...** By withstanding the sexual advances of Potiphar's wife, Joseph proved his virtue and attained the rung of *Yesod*, which is the divine phallus, symbolized by the covenant of circumcision. Through controlling his sexuality, he "preserved the holy covenant," and linked his covenantal sign with the Divine Covenant. The double י (*yod*) in the word ויישם (*va-yisem*), *he was placed*, alludes to the two covenants, human and divine. Joseph's holy act of refusal rendered him worthy of being *placed in* ארון (*aron*), *a coffin*, corresponding to the divine *aron*, "ark" (symbolizing *Shekhinah*), entered by Joseph's archetype, *Yesod*.

On the double י (*yod*) in ויישם (*va-yisem*), see *Sekhel Tov* on the verse; *Zohar* 1:251a; *ZḤ* 43d; Moses de León, *She'elot u-Tshuvot*, 26–27; *Minḥat Shai* on the verse. Cf. Rashbam,

Ibn Ezra, David Kimḥi, and Ḥizzekuni on the verse; Ibn Ezra on Exodus 30:32 (short and long), Micah 1:7.

341. **Woe to inhabitants of the world...** People foolishly assume that every man is worthy of being buried in an *aron*, "a coffin." They fail to realize that only one who has lived a life of sexual purity, preserving the "sign of the holy covenant," deserves to enter an *aron*. If a sexual sinner is buried in a coffin, he thereby taints *Shekhinah*, the divine *aron*, "ark." On not being buried in a coffin, see *Zohar* 1:151a; below, note 344.

342. **A mystery—this must join…** The only man who may enter an earthly *aron* (coffin) is one who has preserved the covenant by living in sexual purity, just as the divine *aron* (ark) must be entered only by *Yesod*.

Apparently, Rabbi Abba interprets the verse in Psalms as follows: By sexual misconduct, a man transforms his holy phallus into a *rod of wickedness*, and he will therefore be excluded from the realm of *Shekhinah* (*the portion of the righteous*) and find no *rest* in Her. See *Or Yaqar*. For a somewhat different interpretation, see *Matoq mi-Devash*.

343. **When he is judged in that world…** If he sinned sexually while alive, he tainted *Yesod*, "the mystery of the holy covenant," and now by being buried in an *aron* (coffin), he taints *Shekhinah*, "the *aron* (ark) of his covenant." Consequently, he is condemned and "excluded from the category of the human," apparently meaning that he is transformed into a bodiless demon, and he is placed in the demonic *aron* (ark).

According to Rabbi Abba, the subject of the verse in Isaiah (*They will… stare*) is the other wicked individuals in Hell, who have not sinned sexually and are thus not "excluded from the category of human."

On the bodiless nature of demons, see above, note 339. On the demonic *aron* (ark), see above, note 333.

344. **if one has not turned back…** Through *teshuvah* ("turning back" to God in repentance), a person can "cover" or purge (most of) his sins. Still, since a certain amount of sinfulness persists, it is generally preferable for the body to be buried without a coffin and to be in direct contact with the soil, because a sinner's body and soul are both punished until the body decomposes.

Sexual sin—"betraying and tainting this sign of the holy covenant"—is particularly grave. Rabbi Abba justifies this assessment by inference from the context in Genesis (38:9–10), concerning Onan, who failed to fulfill the duty of levirate marriage: *When he would come to* [*bed*] *his*

brother's wife, he would waste [*his seed*] *on the ground. What he did was evil in the eyes of* YHVH*, and He put him to death as well*.

On the question of whether it is possible to repent for sexual sins, cf. Vol. 3, p. 328, n. 149. On the soul being punished as long as the body has not decomposed, see *Zohar* 2:151a. Cf. M *Sanhedrin* 6:6; and Rashi on *Sanhedrin* 46a, s.v. *nit'akkel ha-basar*. On the fate of the soul being dependent on the condition of the body in the grave, cf. *Vayiqra Rabbah* 18:1.

345. ***Bezalel made the ark…*** Bezalel lived a life of sexual purity and thus became linked with *Yesod*, so he "attained his allotted share," namely *Shekhinah*. Fittingly, he *made the ark*, which symbolizes Her. On the link between Bezalel and *Yesod*, see *Zohar* 2:152a, 223b–224a, 225a; 3:162b.

346. **All those Companions…** Rabbi Ḥiyya, Rabbi Yitsḥak, and Rabbi Yose kissed Rabbi Abba. For their initial encounter, see above at note 61.

347. **When they reached Rabbi Shim'on…** The four Companions return to their teacher and repeat for him what they have learned from one another on the way.

348. ***The way of the wicked is like darkness…*** The verse concludes: *they do not know what makes them stumble*.

349. **what is the difference between *path* and *way*?…** By discovering fresh meanings of Torah, the righteous create a brand-new *path*, unlike a well-worn *way* that is familiar to all. Wherever they explore becomes new, even if others have passed by before.

On the distinction between *path* and *way*, see *Zohar* 3:88a. Cf. 1:197b; 2:31a–b. The sentence "However, a *path* is that which…" can also be rendered "However, a *path* is that which is just now opened and revealed and formed in that place—a *path* until now untrodden by any feet." O17 (supported by Ms24) reads quite differently: "However, a

path is that which is just now opened and revealed and formed—and disappears, reverting to what it previously was."

350. **ארח (*oraḥ*), *path*...אתארח (*it'araḥ*), visits...** *Shekhinah*, the divine אורח (*oreaḥ*), "guest," comes to visit the righteous who are engaged in Torah, so their route is called ארח (*oraḥ*), *path*.

Cf. M *Avot* 3:2, in the name of Rabbi Ḥanina son of Teradyon: "If two are sitting with words of Torah between them, *Shekhinah* is between them."

351. **A *way* is open to all...** Even the wicked and the demonic Other Side. *The sea* symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is vulnerable to the Other Side. She is also known as משכנא (*mashkena*), "the Dwelling."

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Who makes a way through the sea, a path through mighty waters*. See *Zohar* 1:29b, 48b, 197b,, 237a, 243b; 2:31a–b, 137a; 3:171b.

352. **sublime words were arranged before the Ancient of Days...** The term the Ancient of Days appears in Daniel 7:9: *As I watched, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat—His garment like white snow, the hair of His head like clean fleece, His throne flames of fire, its wheels blazing fire*. In the *Zohar* this name designates the primordial *sefirah* of *Keter*.

Rabbi Shim'on may be referring either to the divine origin of the Companions' words or to their destination, or both. In BT *Pesaḥim* 119a, secrets of Torah are referred to as "things hidden by the Ancient of Days." See the rabbinic blessing in BT *Berakhot* 17a: "May your steps run to hear words of the Ancient of Days!" See BT *Bava Batra* 91b; *Zohar* 1:4b, 8b–9a; 2:134b, 143a, 149a, 168a; 3:20a, 105b, 138b (*IR*), 232b. On words of Torah ascending to adorn God, see above, notes 247, 329. See above at note 347: "When they reached Rabbi Shim'on and arranged before him these words—all that had been said on the way—he wept."

353. ***Joshua son of Nun…*** According to *Sifrei*, Numbers 140: “The face of Moses was like the face of the sun; the face of Joshua was like the face of the moon.” See BT *Bava Batra* 75a. Here, the moon symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who has no light of Her own and is illumined only by *Tif’eret* (symbolizing the sun).

On the moon having no light of her own, see Ibn Ezra on Exodus 3:15; David Kimḥi on Genesis 1:16. On this image as applied to *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:20a, 31a, 132b, 179b, 181a, 233b, 238a, 249b; 2:43a (*Piq*), 90b–91a, 142a, 145b, 218b, 219b; 3:113b; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 338; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 113, 188, 257; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 68–69 (85–86); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 381. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 156a.

354. **What is completeness of the moon?…** When *Shekhinah* becomes full by uniting with *Tif’eret*, She reflects His nature and assumes His name, *YHVH*. Her fullness actually derives from a higher source: the Divine Mother, *Binah*.

On *Shekhinah* and the name *YHVH*, see above, note 313. On *Shekhinah* inheriting from Her Mother, *Binah*, see *Zohar* 1:29a, 183b; 2:135a. Cf. 1:2a.

355. **on the fifteenth day…** The moon becomes full on the fifteenth day of the lunar month. *Shekhinah* is the seventh of the lower *sefirot*, so She is known as *seventh month*. When *Binah* (known as the World that is Coming) illumines Her with ten sefirotic potencies, *Shekhinah* is known as *on the tenth*. Then, when *Shekhinah* attains complete fullness among these potencies, She is called *on the fifteenth*. The number fifteen is equivalent to ה (*he*)—symbolizing *Shekhinah* and equal to five—plus י (*yod*), which equals ten, signifying the ten potencies of *Binah*. These two letters constitute the name יה (*Yah*).

On Leviticus 23:27, see *Zohar* 2:39b, 185b. On *Binah* as the World that is Coming, see above, pp. 34–35, n. 87.

356. **When it assumes this Name…** Apparently meaning, when *Shekhinah* assumes the name יהוה (*YHVH*), it

joins with the second ה (*he*) of this name, enabling Her to nourish all those below. The first *he* symbolizes *Shekhinah*'s link with *Binah* (who is often symbolized by this letter of the name *YHVH*). For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

357. **Joshua—mystery of fullness…** As mentioned above (at note 353), Joshua is linked with the moon, symbolizing *Shekhinah*. Now, Rabbi Shim'on indicates that the name of Joshua's father, נון (*nun*), also signifies *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the letter נ (*nun*).

On *Shekhinah* and the letter *nun*, see *Zohar* 1:147a (*Tos*); 2:91a, 139a, 235b; 3:66b, 155a; *ZḤ* 41c. Cf. *Bahir* 56 (83).

358. ***Was filled…*** Joshua being *filled with a spirit of wisdom* symbolizes *Shekhinah* being filled with the flow of emanation. The first letter of the Holy Name יהוה (*YHVH*) is "the supernal point, which is י (*yod*)," symbolizing the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*. This point expands and turns into the "palace" of *Binah*, who generates the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, which eventually flow into the "palace below," namely *Shekhinah*.

359. ***Moses laid his hands upon him…*** Moses symbolizes *Tif'eret*, who pours blessings into the well of *Shekhinah*.

360. ***You shall not eat over the blood…*** The original meaning of the verse in Leviticus, *You shall not eat over the blood*, apparently relates to a pagan rite of divination, in which a ritual meal was consumed over a pit or large receptacle containing blood, perhaps with the idea that spirits of the dead could be conjured up from the blood. See Naḥmanides on the verse; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1685–86; Alter, *Five Books of Moses*, ad loc.

According to BT *Berakhot* 10b, Rabbi Eli'ezer son of Ya'akov interpreted this verse to mean: "You shall not eat before you have prayed for your blood [i.e., your life]." Here, Rabbi Shim'on links this Talmudic interpretation to the continuation of the verse, comparing one who eats

before praying “to one who divines or interprets omens.” He then describes what happens during sleep, when the *neshamah* (essential “soul”) ascends and the body is sustained by the lowest level of soul, *nefesh*, which is associated with blood.

On sleep as providing a taste of death, see BT *Berakhot* 57b: “Sleep is one-sixtieth of death.” See above, note 323. The comparison of one who eats before praying to one who interprets omens appears in Joseph ibn Zabara, *Sefer ha-Sha’ashu’im*, 9.

On the three aspects of soul, see above, p. 21, n. 53. On the link between blood and *nefesh*, see Deuteronomy 12:23: *For the blood is* הנפש (*ha-nefesh*), *the life*. On the verse in Leviticus, see *Zohar* 1:207b; 2:122a (Vol. 5, p. 149, n. 30).

361. **That power is prepared…** In the morning the *nefesh* is prepared to receive back the *neshamah*. However, when one awakens he is still tainted by the impurity of the demonic Other Side, which dominates the body during sleep when the *neshamah* is absent and lingers on the hands even after the person wakes up. Therefore one must immediately wash his hands. Even so, the *nefesh*, permeating the blood, does not subside until a person prays, when finally the *neshamah* gains strength and dominates the *nefesh*.

On the impurity that accompanies sleep, see above, note 325. On the *neshamah* not returning to full strength until one prays, see *ZḤ* 90c (*MhN, Rut*).

362. מנחש **(*menaḥesh*), a diviner…** Such a person worships the demonic power, pictured as נחש (*naḥash*), “a serpent,” and thereby he strengthens it. Similarly “this one” who eats before praying worships the demonic Other Side, who is identified as the “power of blood.”

363. עונן **(*Onen*), interpreted omens…** Rabbi Shim’on relates this word to עון (*avon*), “sin.” One could object that the two words are not equivalent since עונן (*onen*), “interpreted omens,” has an extra נ (*nun*), which symbolizes *Shekhinah* (see above at note 357). However, this simply

demonstrates that sinful activity is more effective when it is mingled with a holy element.

On the form עונן (*onen*), "interpreted omens," see 2 Kings 21:6; 2 Chronicles 33:6. On maintaining a lie by including an element of truth, see Rashi on Numbers 13:27 (paraphrasing BT *Sotah* 35a); *Zohar* 1:2b; 2:264a; 3:161a.

364. **Human prayer is as you said...** As the Companions discussed. See above at notes 100–140.

365. **First enhancement...** One prepares for prayer by donning the *tallit* and tefillin, referred to here as "*mitsvah* and holiness." See above at note 114. The beginning of the morning service includes a recitation of the sacrifices.

366. **Second enhancement...** Praising God for creating the world through speech and having compassion for the world and its creatures. The prayer *Barukh she-amar* (Blessed be He who spoke) introduces the section of the service known as *Pesuqei de-zimrah* (Verses of Song), consisting almost entirely of psalms.

367. **Third enhancement...** Mentioning the angelic forces, who are referred to in the preceding verse of this psalm: *Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts*.

368. **Fourth enhancement...** Performed by offering the central prayer, which is recited standing and known as *Amidah* (Standing), or simply *Ha-tefillah* (the prayer). By sincere devotion, one is able to unite the divine couple through this prayer, thereby enhancing the Holy Name, *YHVH*.

According to Kabbalah, the name *YHVH* symbolizes the entire sefirotic spectrum. The י (*yod*) symbolizes the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, while its upper stroke symbolizes *Keter*. The first ה (*he*), often a feminine marker, symbolizes the Divine Mother, *Binah*. The ו (*vav*), whose numerical value is six, symbolizes *Tif'eret* and the five *sefirot* surrounding Him (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*). The second ה (*he*) symbolizes *Shekhinah*. See Asher ben David, *Peirush Shem ha-Meforash*, 112; *Zohar* 1:162a (*ST*); 2:123b, 126b–127a, 219b; 3:10b, 65b, 267b; Gikatilla, *Sha'arei Orah*, 44a–45b.

369. **Commandments of Torah in prayer…** The Companions had discussed six commandments connected with prayer, some of which Rabbi Shim'on proceeds to explain. See above at notes 132–40.

370. ***You shall fear* מאלהיך (*me-Elohekha*), *your God*…** Literally, *You shall fear from your God*. What is the sense of the preposition *from*? Rabbi Shim'on explains that Judgment is drawn from *Din* ("Judgment" above) to *Shekhinah* (the divine kernel known as *Elohim*), and then proceeds to lower powers of Judgment "surrounding the kernel." Thus, *You shall fear* [the powers of Judgment that proceed] *me-Elohekha, from your God*, namely from *Shekhinah*.

On the name *Elohim* signifying Judgment, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; JT *Berakhot* 9:5, 14b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 33:3; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 24:2; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:7; *Midrash Tehillim* 56:3; *Shemot Rabbah* 3:6; 6:1–3.

371. **three kinds of fire here…** Commentators differ on the identity of these various kinds of fire. The first fire is apparently the fire of *Shekhinah*, who receives the fire of *Din* (or *Gevurah*) as She unites with *Tif'eret*. The second fire is characterized by נגה (*nogah*), *a radiance*. The third fire is "outside" the *radiance*, and here fear of Judgment prevails.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Vital*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. The full verse in Ezekiel reads: *I looked, and here, a stormy wind coming from the north, a great cloud and flashing fire, and a radiance surrounding it; and from within it, like the color of amber, from within the fire*. On *nogah*, *a radiance*, cf. above, note 148.

372. **four kinds of fire…** These could include the three mentioned previously plus the higher fire of *Din* (or *Gevurah*).

On four kinds (or colors) of fire, see *ZḤ* 39b. On six kinds of fire, see BT *Yoma* 21b. Cf. Rashi on BT *Berakhot* 52b, s.v. *harbeh me'orot*; *Zohar* 1:50b–51a; 3:33a. On *me-Elohekha, from your God*, see above, note 370.

373. **fear and love…** Which derive respectively from *Din* (or *Gevurah*) on the left and *Ḥesed* on the right. Punishment, like fear, derives from the left side and is executed by the fiery forces of Judgment issuing from *Shekhinah*.

374. **From it spreads a fire outside…** From the lower fire of Judgment spreads a demonic fire. As opposed to the holy fire of Judgment linked with *Shekhinah*, one must not fear the demonic fire. When stimulated and intensified by human sin, this demonic "outside fire" can join the holy fire and obscure the holy light.

For the full verse in Ezekiel, see above, note 371. Cf. above, note 144. The verse in Judges reads: *You shall not fear the gods of the Amorites*.

375. **Afterward, love…** After experiencing fear (or awe) of God, one can proceed to love, deriving from *Ḥesed* on the right. By serving out of love, a person can cleave to this *sefirah* and be sanctified by its source, *Binah*, known as the World that is Coming.

On fear (or awe) and love, see *Zohar* 1:11b–12a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 28. On *Binah* as the World that is Coming, see above, pp. 34–35, n. 87.

376. **Now, if you say…** One might assume that fear of God is unimportant, compared with love. However, it is precious, though it does not ascend (or enable one to ascend) to the rung of *Ḥesed*. One who loves God attains that high rung ("mystery of the right") and thereby rules over *Shekhinah*, who is associated with fear.

On ruling over "the fear of God," see BT *Mo'ed Qatan* 16b: *"The righteous one rules the fear of God* (2 Samuel 23:3)…. Rabbi Abbahu said, '… I [God] rule over humanity. Who rules over Me? The righteous one. For I issue a decree and he abolishes it.'"

377. **Mystery of unity…** One who has attained the rung of love can, and must, unify God's name by reciting *Shema* with true intention. Thereby he unites the sefirotic

limbs. The first word of this prayer—שמע (*shema*), *hear*—consists of שם (*shem*), "name," referring to *Shekhinah*, and the letter ע (*ayin*), whose numerical value of seventy signifies seventy names, alluding to the seven lower *sefirot* (or the seven *sefirot* from *Binah* through *Yesod*), each of which includes ten aspects and all of which are included in *Shekhinah*.

On the significance of the *Shema*, see above, note 136. On *Shema* as *shem, ayin*, see *Zohar* 2:160b. On the seventy names of God, see above, note 315.

378. ***Israel*—Israel the Elder...** While the first word of the *Shema* signifies *Shekhinah*, the second word—*Israel*—refers to Her Husband *Tif'eret*, whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of Israel) and who is also known as Israel the Elder. Thus the opening two words allude to the union of the divine couple.

"Israel the Small" refers to the chief angel, Metatron, who is often called נער (*na'ar*), *youth*. On the title "Israel the Small," see *Zohar* 2:43a (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 56d (*QhM*); *TZ*, intro, 14a. On Metatron as *youth*, see 3 Enoch 4:10; BT *Yevamot* 16b; *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *pasuq zeh*; Vol. 5, p. 350, n. 453.

In midrashic literature the title Israel the Elder refers to Israel the patriarch (Jacob), as opposed to the people called Israel. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:11; *Zohar* 1:233a; 2:4a, 43a (*Piq*), 160b; 3:262b–263a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 42–43 (51).

379. **After they merge...** Following the union of *Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret*, a person should proceed to unite Her (together with all the lower *sefirot*) with *Binah*. *Shekhinah* and *Binah* are the two Dwellings, and their union should be followed by an ascent of all the *sefirot* to *Ein Sof*.

380. **This mystery is יהיה (*yihyeh*), *will be*...** The first letter of this word—י (*yod*)—symbolizes the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, which enters and unites with the palace of *Binah*, the Divine Mother, symbolized by the second letter of the word, the feminine marker ה (*he*). The union of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah* is signified by the next two words of the *Shema*: אלהינו

יהוה (*YHVH Eloheinu*), *YHVH our God*. The first of these words begins with *yod* (symbolizing *Ḥokhmah*), while the second refers to *Binah*, who is known as *Elohim*.

One must not separate the lower *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*. Rather, one should "include all those limbs" in their source: the palace of *Binah*—and further, to "the root of the Covenant," namely *Ḥokhmah*. Here, *Ḥokhmah*, the Father, is pictured as the root of *Yesod* (the divine phallus, symbolized by the covenant of circumcision).

381. **Afterward, these two other letters...** The identical concluding letters of יהיה (*yihyeh*), *will be*. This *yod* signifies *Yesod*, while the feminine marker *he* signifies the palace of *Shekhinah*, which houses *Yesod*. Sometimes *Yesod* is pictured as ו (*vav*)—specifically the second *vav* of the letter-name וו (*vav*), resembling the first *vav*, which signifies *Tif'eret*. But here Rabbi Shim'on focuses on *yod* as the symbol of *Yesod*, who unites *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*.

In rabbinic literature, the mark of circumcision is identified with the י (*yod*) of the divine name שדי (*Shaddai*), which is also the initial letter of יהוה (*YHVH*). See *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 14, *Shemini* 8; *Zohar* 1:13a, 56a, 60a, 89a, 93a, 95a–b; 2:3b, 36a, 87b, 235a; 3:13b, 142a (*IR*), 215b, 220a, 256a (*RM*), 266a; Wolfson, "Circumcision and the Divine Name"; idem, *Circle in the Square*, 29–48.

382. **אחד (*Eḥad*), *one*...** By reciting this last word of the first line of the *Shema* with pure intention, a person elevates all the *sefirot*, uniting them with their ultimate source, *Ein Sof*.

383. **unification of Rav Hamnuna Sava...** The secret technique taught to Rav Hamnuna Sava (the Elder) by his father, who learned it from his teacher, who received it in a chain of transmission reaching back to Elijah. Rabbi Shim'on refers to other types of unification, but singles out Rav Hamnuna's as perfect.

See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1006, n. 260. On Rav Hamnuna Sava, see above, p. 71, n. 48. His book is cited frequently in the *Zohar*. See *Zohar* 3:236b.

384. **we prolong *eḥad, one*…** In reciting the first line of the *Shema*. See BT *Berakhot* 13b.

As Rabbi Shim'on indicated above (at notes 380–81), the letters of the word יהיה (*yihyeh*), *will be*, span the *sefirot*—from *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah* through *Yesod* and *Shekhinah*.

385. ***eḥad, one*, mysteriously intimates…** In BT *Berakhot* 13b, Rabbi Ḥiyya son of Abba describes the first line of *Shema* as enthroning God "above, below, and over the four directions of heaven." Here, "above, below" alludes to the higher pair of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah* and the lower pair of *Tif'eret* (or *Yesod*) and *Shekhinah*. "The four directions" correspond to the four components of the sefirotic chariot, namely *Ḥesed, Gevurah, Tif'eret*, and *Shekhinah*, who form a chariot-throne for *Binah*. On the passage in *Berakhot*, see *Zohar* 1:12a, 158a; 2:133b.

386. **mentioning afterward the Exodus…** In the final paragraph of the *Shema*: *I am YHVH your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God* (Numbers 15:41). *Shekhinah* (pictured as the lower world) shared Israel's exile in Egypt, and until She was liberated along with them She could not unite with *Tif'eret* (the upper world). The Exodus is mentioned in order to demonstrate Her liberation.

On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see *Mekhilta*, *Pisḥa* 14, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: "Wherever Israel went in exile, *Shekhinah*, as it were, went into exile with them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* went into exile with them.… When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* went into exile with them. … And when in the future they return, *Shekhinah*, as it were, will return with them."

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 84; JT *Ta'anit* 1:1, 64a; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:54; BT *Megillah* 29a; *Zohar* 1:68b–69a, 120b, 134a, 149a, 159b, 182a, 211a, 237a; 2:2a–b, 41b (*Piq*), 82a, 189b; 3:6a–b, 74a–b, 114b–115a, 297b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 122–23; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 73–74(92–93); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:382–85.

387. **so that Redemption be joined to Prayer…** In the daily morning liturgy, the blessing "Blessed are You, *YHVH*, who has redeemed Israel" immediately precedes the *Amidah*, the "standing" prayer—so central that it is known simply as Prayer. It is considered meritorious to join the blessing of Redemption to this prayer without any interruption or pause. Here, this joining is seen as the beginning of the union of the divine couple, *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, which is consummated during the *Amidah*.

The verse in Leviticus forbids a priest from marrying a divorcée. Here it implies that if *Shekhinah* were actually divorced from *Tif'eret* during Her exile, He could not reunite with Her.

On the importance of joining Redemption to Prayer, see BT *Berakhot* 4b, 9b, 10b. On its kabbalistic significance, see *Zohar* 1:132b, 205b, 228b; 2:128b, 138b, 156a; 3:195b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 78–79; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 75–76 (96).

388. **Look, She is in exile…** Perhaps *Shekhinah*'s state of exile indicates that She is, indeed, divorced. However, Rabbi Shim'on explains that *Shekhinah* has gone into exile in order to accompany and protect Her children, and this does not imply divorce.

In the times that the Temples stood in Jerusalem, when Israel sinned *Shekhinah* ascended, leaving the people vulnerable to attack by their enemies. In both cases, when the Temple was destroyed and the people exiled, *Shekhinah* then joined Her children, living among them to comfort and protect them. But She was never divorced from Her Husband. See Isaiah 50:1: *Where is your mother's bill of divorce with which I sent her away?* Cf. *Zohar* 1:53b.

389. **Therefore, one must demonstrate redemption…** By mentioning the Exodus during prayer. In Exodus 6:6–7, God describes the redemption from Egypt with four verbs: *I will take you out from under the burdens of Egypt and I will rescue you from their bondage and I will*

redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great retributions. And I will take you to Me as a people. These four verbs became known as "four redemptions," by which God assured Israel that He would redeem them from four kingdoms destined to subjugate them, namely Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome. By mentioning and displaying the original redemption from Egypt, one adorns *Shekhinah*, preparing Her to unite with *Tif'eret*.

On the four redemptions in Exodus, see JT *Pesaḥim* 10:1, 37b–c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 88:5; *Shemot Rabbah* 6:4. On the four kingdoms, see Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:223, n. 82.

390. **True, true, true, true...** The prayer immediately following the *Shema*—known as *Emet ve-yatsiv* (True and certain)—includes the word אמת (*emet*), "true," four times. The following prayer—*Ezrat avoteinu*, ([You have been] the Help of our fathers)—includes the same word an additional four times (according to the Sephardic version of the liturgy). The double set of four "true"s ensures that all four redemptions will endure, since according to rabbinic tradition, "the seal of the blessed Holy One is truth."

On truth as God's seal, see JT *Sanhedrin* 1:1, 18a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 81:2; BT *Shabbat* 55a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Devarim Rabbah* 1:10; *Shemot Rabbah* 4:13.

391. **All of them in that Exodus...** The four expressions of redemption provide *Shekhinah* with the adornments She needs for union, and therefore the redemption from Exodus is mentioned in numerous prayers.

392. **Mystery of the sanctification of His Name...** In the *Qedushah* (Sanctification), whose central formulation is: *Holy, holy, holy is YHVH of Hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory* (Isaiah 6:3). By reciting this prayer, Israel joins the angels in sanctifying God's name.

The expression "masters of qualities" refers to those who have mastered the divine qualities, the *sefirot*. Cf. Vol. 5,

p. 216, n. 76.

On the significance of the threefold formula from Isaiah, see *Bahir* 89 (128); Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 56–57; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 149–52; *Zohar* 1:18b; 2:52a, 121b; 3:93a (*Piq*), 190b, 297a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 90 (and Wolfson's note); idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 103–5 (131–34); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:969.

393. **surrendering the soul…** Immediately following the repetition of the *Amidah*, the *Taḥanun* (Supplication) is recited. This prayer is also known as *nefilat appayim* (falling on the face, prostration), and originally it was recited in this position. By praying this prayer passionately, one can "surrender his soul." See above, notes 103, 138.

394. ***Then those who revere YHVH* נדברו (*nidberu*), *spoke…*** Rabbi Shim'on wonders why the verse employs the verbal form נדברו (*nidberu*), rather than the more frequent form דברו (*dibberu*). Technically, the form *nidberu* has a reciprocal sense here: *spoke with one another*, but Rabbi Shim'on construes it in the passive sense: *were spoken*. He explains that when *those who revere YHVH* speak words of wisdom, those words ascend to heaven, where they are presented by angels to God and are *spoken* before Him. God delights in such words, as indicated by the verse from Proverbs, which in the biblical context is spoken by Wisdom.

On words of Torah ascending to, or adorning, God, see above, notes 247, 329. "His potent bosom" renders תוקפיה (*tuqpeih*), "His power, strength." In the *Zohar* this word usually means simply "power," but occasionally it signifies "bosom, breast." This new sense derives from *Targum Onqelos* on Numbers 11:12, which renders the biblical expression שאהו בחיקך (*sa'ehu ve-ḥeiqekha*), *carry it* [the people of Israel] *in your bosom*, as סוברהי בתוקפך (*sovarhi ve-tuqpakh*), "carry it in your strength." This Targumic rendering is a paraphrase, unless the translator read or imagined the Hebrew בחזקך (*ve-ḥizqekha*), *in your strength*, instead of בחיקך

(*ve-ḥeiqekha*), *in your bosom*—a tiny orthographical difference.

Based on this Targumic usage of *tuqpa*, the *Zohar* sometimes employs the word to signify "bosom." Scholem contends that this is due to a misunderstanding: "The author mistook the Midrashic *interpretation* for a *literal translation!*" However, it seems more likely that the newfangled meaning is due not to ignorance but to linguistic playfulness, so typical of the *Zohar*.

See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Numbers 11:12; *Zohar* 2:9a, 96a, 113a–b; 3:127b (*IR*), 206a, 234a; *ZḤ* 92c–d (*MhN, Eikhah*); Luria, *Va-Ye'esof David*, s.v. *tuqpa*; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 165, 389, n. 48.

The clause in Malachi reads (consistently across extant biblical manuscripts): ויכתב ספר זכרון (*va-yikkatev sefer zikkaron*), *and a book of remembrance was written*. However, here Ms24, O17, and the Mantua and Cremona editions all read ויכתב בספר זכרון (*va-yikkatev be-sefer zikkaron*), *and it was written in a book of remembrance*. See Vol. 3, pp. 228–29, n. 305; pp. 485–86, n. 835; and *Minḥat Shai* on the verse.

395. **Here is written twice *those who revere YHVH*...** The duplication of this phrase implies both the righteous below on earth who innovate words of Torah and their images above in God's presence, which are formed from these wise words.

396. **in the Book of Enoch...** In this ancient source Rabbi Shim'on found confirmation that words of the righteous ascend to God and form an image of the person who uttered them. On the Book of Enoch, see above, p. 8, n. 21.

397. ***And those who contemplate His name...*** According to Kabbalah, the entire Torah constitutes God's name. Thus those who contemplate words of Torah are, in effect, contemplating *His name*.

On Torah as God's Name, see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 548; Naḥmanides, introduction to

Commentary on the Torah, 6–7; *Zohar* 2:60a, 87a, 90b, 124a, 161b, 221a; 3:13b, 19a, 21a, 35b–36a, 73a, 89b, 98b, 159a, 265b, 298b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 341–42; Scholem, *On the Kabbalah*, 37–44; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1085–86; Idel, "Tefisat ha-Torah." On the verse in Malachi, see BT *Berakhot* 6a.

398. ***Above the firmament…*** According to Rabbi Shim'on, the prophet Ezekiel describes here *the firmament* (or *heaven*) below the *sefirot*, since "no one can gaze upon the heaven above," namely *Binah*. Above the lower heaven stands *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as *sapphire* or "the fine precious pearl."

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. Cf. above, notes 284–85. For *Shekhinah* as a pearl, see *Bahir* 49 (72).

The verse in Ezekiel, describing what lies above the angelic *ḥayyot* (*living beings*), reads in full: *Above the firmament* [or: *expanse*] *over their heads—like the appearance of sapphire, image of a throne. And upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of a human being upon it above*.

399. ***Image of a throne…*** *A throne* refers to *Shekhinah*, who is a throne for *Tif'eret*. *The throne* would refer to the ultimate, hidden throne, *Binah*, who is a throne for *Ḥokhmah*.

400. ***An image like the appearance of a human being…*** Rabbi Shim'on wonders about the apparent redundancy: *an image like the appearance*. He explains that *an image of a human being* refers to the configuration of the divine male (extending from *Ḥokhmah* through *Yesod*). The additional phrase *like the appearance* includes words of wisdom spoken on earth, which ascend and assume the form of the human who spoke them.

401. **As for you, Companions…** The words of wisdom spoken by the Companions on their journey have ascended to heaven, delighting God, and now those words form

images of the rabbis who uttered them. On the significance of אדם (*adam*), "the human," see the preceding note.

402. **contemplating worldly matters…** Rabbi Shim'on could see that such mundane activity diminished Rabbi Yose's heavenly image by one letter. Note that Rabbi Shim'on addresses him simply as Yose, without the title Rabbi.

On Rabbi Yose "contemplating worldly matters," see *Zohar* 2:17b (*MhN*).

403. **Rabbi Yose rose and rejoiced…** His joy of Torah perfected his image above. Confirming this, Rabbi Shim'on addresses him with his full name. On "the Ancient of Days," see above, note 352.

404. **He opened, saying…** Having gazed upon Rabbi Yose, Rabbi Shim'on offers an interpretation related to vision.

The ציץ (*tsits*), *medallion* (or *plate, rosette*), was a gold plate worn on the forehead of the high priest over his turban, bearing the inscription קדש ליהוה (*qodesh la-YHVH*), *Holy to YHVH*. Rabbi Shim'on relates the word *tsits* to the verbal root צוץ (*tsuts*), "to look, peek, peer, gaze." He proceeds to explain how the *tsits* enabled the high priest to determine a person's character.

On *tsits* and *tsuts*, see Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 28:37, and Rashbam and Baḥya ben Asher on 28:36, all of whom cite Song of Songs 2:9: מציץ (*metsits*), *peering* [or: *gazing, peeking*], *through the lattice*. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:78.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *They made the medallion of the holy diadem of pure gold, and wrote upon it an inscription of seal-engravings: "Holy to YHVH."* On this inscription, see JT *Yoma* 4:1, 41c; *Megillah* 1:8, 71d; BT *Shabbat* 63b, *Sukkah* 5a, *Gittin* 20a–b; Sarna, *Exodus*, 184.

405. **In the *tsits* were letters of the Holy Name…** See the preceding note. If the person looking at the *tsits* was

virtuous, then the letters *YHVH* would protrude and illumine his face—but only for a moment.

On using the *tsits* to examine someone, see BT *Yevamot* 60b. Cf. *Zohar* 2:218b.

406. **If… his face did not display…** The illumination of the letters *YHVH*.

"Brazen-faced" renders תקיף מצחא (*taqqif mitsḥa*), literally "of harsh forehead," associated here with the *tsits* worn on the high priest's forehead. On the *tsits* atoning for being brazen-faced, see JT *Yoma* 7:5, 44c; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 10:6; BT *Zevaḥim* 88b; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:1; *Zohar* 2:218b; 3:174b–175a (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 67d (*ShS*).

407. ***They made tsits, the medallion of, the holy diadem*** On the *tsits*, see above, note 404.

408. ***Let your eyes be on the field…*** The context (Ruth 2:8–9) reads: *Boaz said to Ruth, "Listen, my daughter. Don't go to glean in another field and don't go away from here, but stay here close to my maidens. Let your eyes be on the field they are reaping, and follow after them. Have I not ordered the young men not to harm you? And if you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn."* Rabbi Yehudah wonders what spiritual message is being conveyed here.

409. **many verses… that seem as if they need not have been written…** Whose deeper significance is not apparent.

See BT *Ḥullin* 60b, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish, "Many verses seem fit to be burned, yet precisely these are essential components of Torah." Cf. Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 37; *Zohar* 1:201a; 2:236a; Matt, "The Aura of Secrecy," 199–200.

On the significance of every element of Torah, see also *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 336; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 32:47; BT *Eruvin* 13a; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 37–38; *Zohar* 1:54a, 135a, 145b, 163a, 187a, 234b; 2:12a, 55b–56a, 59b, 65b, 93b, 95a, 98b–99b, 124a;

3:6b–7a, 72a–b, 79b, 149a–b, 152a, 174b, 202a, 221a, 265a, 269a; *ZḤ* 6d (*MhN*). Cf. BT *Menaḥot* 29b; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:50.

410. **like someone who does not taste a dish…** For the culinary metaphor, see *Zohar* 2:29a, 149a. Cf. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 4:13; *Zohar* 1:255b (*Hash*); *ZḤ* 37c; the parable in 2:176a–b; Vol. 1, p. xxv.

Rabbi Yehudah explains that Boaz praised Ruth's eyes because of her modesty and her benevolent eye. He construes the verse as: *Your eyes are on the field they are reaping*. On Ruth's modesty in the field, see BT *Shabbat* 113b; *Rut Rabbah* 4:9 (on 2:5).

On Boaz as a judge, see *Rut Rabbah* 4:5 (on 2:4). According to BT *Bava Batra* 91a, in the name of Rav, Boaz is identical with Ibzan, the Israelite leader (or judge) mentioned in Judges 12:8–10. See *Zohar* 2:104a.

411. ***Let your eyes be on the field they are reaping…*** Boaz said this because he realized that Ruth's benevolent eyes brought blessing to the field.

It would seem that the object of the clause *follow after them* is the other gleaners in the field. However, Rabbi Yehudah explains that Boaz is referring here to Ruth's eyes. Normally, it is forbidden "to follow after one's eyes" (see Numbers 15:39), but Ruth's benevolent eyes deserve to be followed.

412. **Alternatively, *Let your eyes…*** Boaz foresaw that King David would descend from Ruth, and this is why he spoke of her *eyes*, alluding to kings and rulers.

Generations earlier, Tamar became a future ancestor of King David by seducing her father-in-law, Judah. According to the account in Genesis, she attracted Judah by sitting at the roadside בפתח עינים (*be-fetaḥ einayim*) *at the entrance to* [the village called] *Enaim*—understood here as *in the opening of Eyes*. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 85:7 9 (and parallels); *Zohar* 1:1b; 3:71b–72a.

On the Sanhedrin as *the eyes of the community*, and on all the limbs following the eyes, see *Rut Rabbah* (ed. Lerner) 4:12 (on *Let your eyes be on the field*); *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:15.

413. ***In the field…*** The verse reads: *Let your eyes be* בשדה (*ba-sadeh*), *in* [or: *on*] *the field*. Rabbi Yehudah interprets *the field* as referring to Zion and Jerusalem, where the royal *eyes* (descended from Ruth) would reign.

The full verse in Genesis describes Isaac the patriarch, smelling the fragrance of the garments worn by his son Jacob: *He smelled the fragrance of his garments and blessed him and said, "See, the fragrance of my son is like the fragrance of a field blessed by YHVH."* On Jerusalem as a field, see Rashi on Ezekiel 17:5.

414. ***That they are reaping…*** The field of Jerusalem yields Torah for the whole world.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Many peoples will go and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of YHVH, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His paths." For from Zion will come forth Torah, and the word of YHVH from Jerusalem.*

415. ***And follow after them…*** Boaz tells Ruth that she will emulate the royal *eyes* through her worthy deeds.

416. ***Have I not ordered the young men…*** The verse reads: *Have I not ordered the young men not to* נגעך (*nog'eikh*), *touch* [or: *harm, molest*] *you?* (See above, note 408.) Here, Rabbi Yehudah adopts the literal meaning *touch you*, reflecting the view that a woman could be easily seduced.

"A woman's mind is easily swayed" renders דעתה קלה אתתא (*itteta da'atah qallah*), literally "A woman's mind is light," or "A woman is light-headed." See BT *Qiddushin* 80b, in a sexual context: "Women are light-headed [i.e., easily swayed]."

417. ***And if you are thirsty…*** The verse reads: *And if you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the*

young men have drawn. See above, note 408.

The verse in Isaiah is addressed to Jewish exiles in Babylonia, who are urged to come to Jerusalem, bearing the holy vessels that the Babylonians had taken from the Temple. Here, Rabbi Yehudah applies it to nations of the world, who are destined to bring the righteous as a gift to the Messiah.

On the nations bringing gifts to the Messiah, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 78:12; 97:10 (p. 1219); BT *Pesaḥim* 118b; *Shemot Rabbah* 35:5; *Midrash Tehillim* 87:6.

On the righteous as vessels, see *Rut Rabbah* 4:12 (on *And if you are thirsty, go the vessels*). On God's broken human vessels (who endure suffering or poverty), see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 7:2; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 24:5; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 11, p. 211; *Zohar* 1:10b; 2:86b; 3:90b; *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 38:1; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1455, n. 120; 1463, nn. 288, 308. Cf. *ZḤ* 77c (*MhN, Rut*); above at note 66; and Psalms 34:19: *YHVH is near to the brokenhearted*.

418. ***Boaz ate and drank…*** According to *Rut Rabbah* 5:15 (on this verse), Boaz's *heart was glad* because he blessed God for the food that he had eaten. Here, Rabbi Yose reinterprets the verse as: *He gladdened his heart*, that is, by offering a blessing Boaz *gladdened* the divine heart, *Shekhinah*, who is also referred to as "another place." See *Zohar* 2:128b; *ZḤ* 86c, 87c (both *MhN, Rut*).

The verse in Psalm 27 reads: *Of You, my heart said, "Seek My face*." Here Rabbi Yose reads it as: *To You he said, "My heart,"* meaning that King David called God *my heart*. See *Zohar* 2:128b; 3:93b.

The verse in Psalm 73 reads: *God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever*. This serves as a proof-text for the idea that God is Israel's heart. See *Eikhah Rabbah, Petiḥta* 16; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:2. On *Shekhinah* sharing in the Sabbath delight, cf. above, note 168.

419. **Why?...** Why does *Shekhinah* enjoy the blessing offered by someone after eating? Because even God finds it difficult to nourish the whole world, and when a person recites Grace after Meals, *Shekhinah* appreciates these grateful words, which also stimulate a nourishing flow from the higher *sefirot*. Thus She "derives joy from food below and above." Here, *Shekhinah* ("that place") is referred to as the blessed Holy One.

See BT *Pesaḥim* 118a, in the name of Rabbi El'azar ben Azariah: "Human sustenance is as difficult [to provide] as splitting the Red Sea, as is written: *Who gives food to all flesh* (Psalms 136:25), and near it: *To Him who cut the Red Sea into pieces* (ibid., 13).

See Bereshit *Rabbah* 97(98):3 (p. 1245); *Zohar* 1:207b; 2:52b, 170a; 3:292b (*IZ*); *ZḤ* 86d (*MhN, Rut*).

420. **Mystery of weekdays... On Sabbath...** On weekdays *Shekhinah* enjoys the words of Grace after Meals, whereas on Sabbath She enjoys the actual food of these holy meals. She is then "comprised of all, from above and from below," which apparently means "from the words of Grace ascending on high and from the food below." The verse in Chronicles now implies: "The nourishment that we have received *from Your hand have we given* back to *You*, delighting *Shekhinah*.

421. **giving to another generously...** To *Shekhinah*.

On the importance of engaging in words of Torah at a meal, see M *Avot* 3:3, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on: "If three have eaten at one table without speaking over it words of Torah, it is as though they have eaten of sacrifices to the dead.... But if three have eaten at one table and have spoken over it words of Torah, it is as if they have eaten from the table of the Omnipresent."

422. **Four chariots...** The four blessings in Grace after Meals nourish the four angelic chariots beneath *Shekhinah*, and She Herself is enhanced by these blessings.

The verse in Proverbs reads: *He that has a generous eye* יְבֹרָךְ (*yevorakh*), *shall be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor*. By a change in vocalization, the verse is construed differently: *He that has a generous eye* יְבָרֵךְ (*yevarekh*), *shall bless*. See BT *Sotah* 38b, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi: "We give the cup of blessing for the recital of Grace after Meals only to one who has a generous eye, as is said: *He that has a generous eye* יבורך (*yevorakh*), *shall be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor*. Do not read *yevorakh, shall be blessed*, but rather יְבָרֵךְ (*yevarekh*), *shall bless*."

Here, apparently, Rabbi Yose argues that if the revised reading of the verse does not refer to reciting Grace after Meals for the sake of *Shekhinah*, then the two halves of the (revised) verse do not match: *He that has a generous eye shall bless, for he gives of his bread to the poor*. However, if the verse does refer to this mystical recitation, then the mystical logic is perfect: One who blesses generously nourishes *Shekhinah*, who is known as *poor* because She has nothing of Her own, only what is provided to Her from the higher *sefirot*.

For various interpretations, see *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On *Shekhinah* having nothing of Her own, see above, note 353.

423. **Boaz had a benevolent eye...** Thus the revised verse in Proverbs applies to him: *He that has a generous* [or: *benevolent*] *eye shall bless, for he gives of his bread to the poor*—namely to *Shekhinah*. As a result of reciting Grace after Meals joyously and generously, Boaz *went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain*—which, according to Rabbi Yose, means that his soul reached *Shekhinah*, who is pictured as *the heap of grain*, based on a similar image in Song of Songs, where *Shekhinah* is described lovingly by Her divine partner. So too, anyone who recites Grace after Meals with joyous devotion will eventually inhabit the palaces of *Shekhinah*.

The full verse in Ruth reads: *Boaz ate and drank, and his heart was glad, and he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came stealthily and uncovered his feet and lay down*.

424. **All the brazen-faced of Israel…** When they gazed upon the *tsits*—the "medallion" worn on the forehead of the high priest—they felt ashamed of their misdeeds and turned back to God in repentance.

On the *tsits* and its miraculous nature, see above, notes 404–5. On the *tsits* atoning for being brazen-faced, see above, note 406. This section (extending to p. 251 at n. 438) appears with variations in *ZḤ* 67d–68b (*ShS*).

425. **Letters of… the Holy Name…** The *tsits* was engraved with the inscription קדש ליהוה (*qodesh la-YHVH*), *Holy to YHVH*.

See above, note 404. On the power of the *tsits* to atone, see the preceding note; Exodus 28:38; M *Pesaḥim* 7:7; *Tosefta Pesaḥim* 6:5; Lieberman, *Tosefta ki-Fshutah*, 4:584–85; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:512.

426. **Similarly, incense…** The incense offered in the Temple in Jerusalem eliminated the evil impulse.

"Smoke-raiser" is the name of an ingredient of the incense that caused the smoke to rise straight. See *Sifra, Aḥarei Mot* 3:11, 81b; *Tosefta Yoma* 1:8; 2:6–7; JT *Yoma* 1:5, 39a–b; 3:11, 41a; BT *Yoma* 38a, 53a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 3:4 (on 3:6).

On the power of incense to banish demonic forces, see *Targum* on Song of Songs 4:6; *Zohar* 1:230a; 3:151b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 87.

The description "leaving him with only one heart toward his Father in heaven" derives from BT *Berakhot* 57a. Here it recalls an interpretation of the biblical command *You shall love YHVH your God with all* לבבך (*levavekha*), *your heart* (Deuteronomy 6:5). Why does the verse read *levavekha*, containing a double ב (*vet*), instead of לבך (*libbekha*) with one ב (*bet*)? According to the Mishnah, the

doubling of the letter signifies the two impulses within the human heart. See M *Berakhot* 9:5: "*With all* לבבך (*levavekha*), *your heart*—with both your impulses: the good impulse and the evil impulse." Ideally, one should serve God not only with the good impulse but even with the evil impulse—by subduing it, or by sublimating and channeling one's passions into virtuous action, thereby contributing the raw power of the evil impulse to the good. Here, Rabbi Yose implies that once the evil impulse has been eliminated, a person is left "with only one heart toward his Father in heaven," namely the good impulse.

427. ***Take the fire-pan…*** Following the death of the rebel Korah and his followers, the Israelites murmur against Moses and Aaron, and God sends a plague against the people. Moses commands Aaron to offer incense, and the plague ceases. According to BT *Shabbat* 89a (in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Levi), the Angel of Death himself transmitted the secret of incense to Moses.

Rabbi Yose notes that incense can eliminate evil forces from the home; all the more so, the holy incense offered in the Temple eliminated the power of the Other Side.

428. **Whoever contemplates and reads…** The description of the preparation of the incense is included as part of the morning service. See JT *Yoma* 4:4, 41d; BT *Kareitot* 6a; below, notes 437, 444.

429. **the alien kingdom…** The demonic Other Side, or the kingdom of the Gentiles. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:933.

430. **In that incense…** The priest would see the letters of the name *YHVH*, and then angelic chariots escorting the column of smoke above. The fragrance of the incense delighted *Shekhinah* and linked the *sefirot* to one another.

Rabbi Yose associates the Hebrew word קטרת (*qetoret*) with the Aramaic root קטר (*qtr*), "to tie, bind." See *Zohar* 1:230a; 3:11a–b, 37b, 58b, 151b, 177b; Moses de León,

Sefer ha-Rimmon, 86–87. On the atoning power of incense, see Numbers 17:11–12; BT *Yoma* 44a, *Zevaḥim* 88b.

431. ***He made*** **מזבח (*mizbeaḥ*), *an altar*...** The altar for ascent offerings stood in the courtyard in front of the Tabernacle (and later the Temple), whereas the incense altar was placed within the Tabernacle (and the Temple). Rabbi Yose wonders why the latter is called מזבח (*mizbeaḥ*), *an altar*—literally *a slaughter-site*—since no animals were sacrificed on it.

The verse in Exodus reads: *You shall make an altar for burning incense, acacia wood you shall make it*. Cf. Exodus 37:25; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

432. **because it nullifies and binds...** The incense binds the evil powers, as an animal is bound before being slaughtered. The Other Side was overwhelmed by the incense and could not approach *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the Dwelling.

Whereas the Other Side partakes of certain sacrificial portions and fat, only God savors the incense. Fittingly, the incense altar—the site of blessing—is concealed within the sanctuary, since according to the Talmud, "Blessing is found… only in that which is hidden from the eye."

In rabbinic law, sacrificial portions and fat that were not totally consumed by fire during the day can be burnt on the altar throughout the night. According to the *Zohar*, such nighttime offerings are intended to nourish demonic forces. See M *Berakhot* 1:1; BT *Berakhot* 26b; *Zohar* 2:130a, 141a, 162a, 181b; *ZḤ* 46c. On the portion offered to the Other Side, see also *ZḤ* 68a (*ShS*); above, pp. 16–17, n. 44; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:890–95.

See BT *Ta'anit* 8b: "Blessing is not found in anything weighed, measured, or counted, but only in that which is hidden from the eye." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 64:6; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 10:6; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 25, 127b; *Tanḥuma, Re'eh* 14; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Re'eh* 12; *Zohar* 1:5a, 64b,

202a; 2:187b, 221b, 225a, 227b; 3:117b. On the incense being offered in secret, see BT *Zevaḥim* 88b.

"Attained" renders אתזכי (*itzakkei*), which could also be construed as "was purified," so the sentence could mean: "And since [the Other Side] was not purified, and no one but the blessed Holy One mingled in that joy above…" See *ZḤ* 68a (and *Nitsotsei Zohar*, ad loc.); *Sullam*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:934; *Matoq mi-Devash*; Edri.

433. ***He stood between the dead and the living…*** By offering incense, Aaron ended the deadly plague. (See above, note 427.) Similarly, by reciting the Preparation of the Incense each day with true devotion, one can thwart the Angel of Death. See *Zohar* 1:100b–101a (*MhN*).

The context in Numbers (17:12–13) reads: *Aaron took as Moses had spoken, and he ran into the midst of the assembly, and, look, the plague had begun among the people! He put in incense and atoned for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was halted*.

434. ***an altar*** **מקטר קטרת (*miqtar qetoret*), *for burning incense…*** Rabbi Yose explains the Hebrew word *miqtar, for burning*, on the basis of the Aramaic root קטר (*qtr*), "to tie, bind." Thus the verse now means: …*an altar for binding* [*the Other Side by means of*] *incense*. See above, note 430. On the verse in Exodus, see above, note 431.

435. **the altar must be offered incense…** The altar symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is sanctified by the incense. The verse now means: … *an altar for which incense is burnt*.

436. ***miqtar qetoret*—according to its translation…** As translated in *Targum Onqelos*, which reads: עלוהי קטורת בוסמין לאקטרא (*le-aqtara alohi qetoret busmin*), "to sacrifice upon it fragrant incense." The verse implies that sacred incense can be burnt only on this altar—except on Yom Kippur, when the high priest would burn incense in a fire-pan within the Holy of Holies.

437. **One who is pursued by Judgment…** One who is being punished by Divine Judgment can be saved if he turns back to God in repentance and recites the Preparation of the Incense devoutly and regularly. The incense offered in the Temple sustained the world and united the *sefirot* above; now that the Temple no longer exists, the recitation of the Preparation of the Incense does the same.

On reciting the Preparation of the Incense in the evening (as well as the morning), see *Seder Rav Amram Ga'on*, 40; Simḥah ben Samuel, *Maḥazor Vitri*, 5, 79; Abraham ben Nathan ha-Yarḥi, *Sefer ha-Manhig*, 1:31, 120; Jacob ben Asher, *Arba'ah Turim, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 133, 237; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 59–60.

The context (Exodus 30:7–8) reads: *Aaron shall burn upon it aromatic incense morning after morning; when he tends the lamps he shall burn it. And when Aaron lights the lamps at twilight he shall burn it, a perpetual incense before YHVH throughout your generations*.

438. **prayer is most exalted of all…** The commandments.

439. **What is the difference…** According to a rabbinic tradition, the daily prayers were instituted in correspondence to the daily sacrifices.

Rabbi Yose indicates that whereas prayer restores harmony in the upper realm, incense actually links the *sefirot*. It accomplishes this by removing the filthy Other Side from *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the Dwelling), purifying Her so that She can unite with the upper *sefirot*. Israel's daily recitation of the Preparation of the Incense now takes the place of the original incense offering in the Temple and achieves a similar effect.

On the relation between the daily prayers and the daily sacrifices, see JT *Berakhot* 4:1, 7b; *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:9; BT *Berakhot* 26b. On incense being more important than all animal sacrifices, see *Zohar* 3:11a, 58b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 86.

440. ***Take for yourself fragrant spices…*** Rabbi Yose wonders why this particular divine command to Moses is worded *Take for yourself*. He explains that this implies Moses' own pleasure and benefit, since through the offering of incense *Shekhinah* was purified of the filthy Other Side and prepared for union with Her Husband—a role played by Moses himself, who had attained the rung of *Tif'eret*. This resembles the situation of a woman who is cleansed of menstrual impurity and thereby allowed to unite with her husband.

On the hyperliteral interpretation of לְךָ (*lekha*) as *for* [or: *to*] *yourself*, see *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 27, p. 144; Rashi and Naḥmanides on Genesis 12:1; *Zohar* 1:77b–78a, 254b (*Hash*); 2:32a (Vol. 4, p. 134, n. 235); 3:17b, 157a; *ZḤ* 71b (*ShS*); and the following note.

On Moses as the husband of *Shekhinah*, see above, pp. 103–4, n. 128. On the verse in Exodus, see BT *Yoma* 3a–b.

441. ***Take for yourself a calf…*** According to the hyperliteral interpretation of *for yourself*, Aaron was commanded to take the sacrificial calf in order to atone for the sin of the Golden Calf, which he had facilitated.

Similarly, when Moses was commanded *Carve for yourself two tablets of stone*, this implied that he would benefit from them, since they were to be made of sapphire and the chips produced by his carving would make him rich.

On the verse in Leviticus, see *Sifra, Shemini, millu'im* 3, 43c; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 4; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemini* 6; Rashi, ad loc.; *Zohar* 3:37a–38a. Cf. Ibn Ezra (long) on Exodus 32:1. The full verse in Exodus reads: *YHVH said to Moses, "Carve yourself two tablets of stone like the first ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you smashed."* See *Sifrei*, Numbers 101; JT *Sheqalim* 5:2, 49a; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 32:2; BT *Nedarim* 38a; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 9:11; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 29, *Eqev* 9; *Shemot Rabbah* 46:2.

442. קטרת **(*Qetoret*), Incense, forges links…** Rabbi Yose again connects the Hebrew word קטרת (*qetoret*) with the Aramaic root קטר (*qtr*), "to tie, bind." See above, note 430.

When *Shekhinah* is not united with *Tif'eret*, She is symbolized by the letter ד (*dalet*), implying that She is דלה (*dallah*), "poor," deprived of the flow of the emanation. The offering of incense purifies Her, enabling Her to join (or become) ה (*he*)—the last letter of יהוה (*YHVH*)—and then unite with *Tif'eret* (and the *sefirot* surrounding Him), symbolized by ו (*vav*), the third letter of *YHVH*. *Tif'eret* (united with *Shekhinah*) then ascends to *Binah*, who is also symbolized by ה (*he*), specifically the second letter of *YHVH*. *Binah* is illumined by *Ḥokhmah*, the primordial point symbolized by י (*yod*), the first letter of *YHVH*. Finally, the highest *sefirah*, *Keter* (also known as Will) "raises all to *Ein Sof*." On the letters of *YHVH* as symbolizing the *sefirot*, see above, note 368.

443. **mystery of the Holy Name…** *YHVH*, whose letters span all of the *sefirot*, as described in the preceding note. The sefirotic union generates blessings for all worlds below.

444. **Incense is always first…** Just as the offering of incense preceded the offering of the sacrifices, so the Preparation of the Incense is recited daily near the beginning of the morning service. No song or prayer can ascend until the demonic filth is removed by (mentioning) the incense.

Actually, the prevalent medieval custom was to recite the Preparation of the Incense toward the end of the morning service. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 86; and Wolfson's n. 5; *Zohar* 3:224a (*RM*); *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

The verse in Leviticus implies that first *Shekhinah* (symbolized by *the Shrine*) must be cleansed of demonic filth by the incense, then Israel can be purged of its *transgressions* and *sins* by sacrifices, and finally songs and prayers can ascend. The full verse reads: *He shall purge the Shrine of the impurities of the Children of Israel and of their transgressions, including all their sins*.

445. **to restore from below to above…** Drawing all the *sefirot* above to *Ein Sof*. In order "to restore below"—that is, to restore *Shekhinah*—one must contemplate and permute the letters of the name *YHVH*, by which *Shekhinah* is united with the *sefirot* above Her. See above, note 442.

446. **Granted, below…** Of course, the verse applies to women on earth, but how can it pertain to the Divine Woman, *Shekhinah*?

447. ***As a hart yearns for streams of water…*** *Shekhinah* is pictured as a deer yearning for the flow of emanation. She holds the keys to the treasuries of divine blessing, which She conveys to the worlds below.

In *Zohar* 3:68a, *streams of water* symbolize specifically *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*. On *Shekhinah* as a deer, see *Zohar* 1:4a; 2:7b, 8b, 10a–b, 36b, 46a, 52b, 56b, 119b (*RM*); 3:13a, 21b, 25b, 68a, 249a–b. On "a thousand keys," cf. the image of "a thousand mountains" sprouting vegetation for *Shekhinah*; see Vol. 3, p. 341, n. 219.

The full verse in Psalms reads: *As a hart yearns for streams of water, so my soul yearns for You, O God*. See the following note.

448. **Here one should contemplate…** Why does the beginning of the verse in Psalms employ a masculine subject followed by a feminine verb? In order to indicate that the male and female aspects of God (*Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*) are as one and should not be separated by human misconduct or faulty contemplation. Such separation ruins harmony above and the transmission of blessing below.

On the double gender of the verse, see *Midrash Tehillim* 42:1; Rashi on Psalms 42:2.

449. **This female *ta'arog*, *yearns*…** *Shekhinah* yearns for the flow from above and is impregnated by Her partner. However, She is influenced by Judgment, which holds the world accountable for misconduct, and therefore *Shekhinah* finds it difficult to deliver blessing to the world. The blessed

Holy One then summons the demonic Serpent, who bites *Shekhinah*'s vagina, and She gives birth.

This image derives from BT *Bava Batra* 16b, where Rabbah offers a paraphrase of God's words to Job out of the whirlwind, explaining His wondrous precision in nature: "*Do you observe the calving of does?* (Job 39:1). This doe has a narrow vagina. When she crouches to give birth, I prepare a serpent who bites the vagina and she is loosened of her offspring. If it comes one second too soon or one second too late, she immediately dies."

In *Zohar* 3:249b, Rabbi Abba teaches that the demonic serpent bites the doe's vagina twice. After the first bite, the serpent licks her blood, deriving nourishment; after the second bite, water issues, sustaining heavenly creatures. The serpent's bite and the nourishment that he derives ensure a successful birth, which sustains life in the worlds below.

On the doe giving birth, see *Midrash Shemu'el* 9:2; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 2; *Midrash Tehillim* 42:1; Rashi on Job 39:1; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Psalms 741, 862; Joseph ben Shalom Ashkenazi, *Peirush Sefer Yetsirah*, 8c–d; *Zohar* 2:52b, 119b (*RM*); 3:67b–68a, 67b–68a (*RM*), 249a (*RM*), 249a–b. Cf. *Zohar* 2:111b.

450. ***And he will rule over you…*** *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the sun) dominates *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon).

The reference to the moon speaking and diminishing Her light derives from the story in BT *Ḥullin* 60b: "Rabbi Shim'on son of Pazzi pointed out a contradiction. 'It is written: *God made the two great lights* (Genesis 1:16), and it is written [in the same verse]: *the greater light… and the lesser light*. The moon said before the blessed Holy One, "Master of the Universe! Can two kings possibly wear one crown? [i.e., How can both of us be *great*?]" He answered, "Go, diminish yourself!" She said before Him, "Master of the Universe! Because I have suggested something proper I should make myself smaller?" He replied, "Go and rule by

day and night." She said, "But what is the value of this? What good is a lamp at noon?"....Seeing that her mind was uneasy [that she could not be consoled], the blessed Holy One said, "Bring an atonement for Me for making the moon smaller."' As was said by Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish: 'Why is the goat offered on the new moon distinguished by the phrase *to* [or: *for*] *YHVH* (Numbers 28:15)? The blessed Holy One said, "Let this goat be an atonement for My having made the moon smaller."'"

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 6:3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 6, 51; *Zohar* 1:19b–20a, 181a–b; 2:138a, 144b, 147b–148a; *ZḤ* 70d–71a (*ShS*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 189; idem; *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 35b. On *Shekhinah* as the moon, see above, note 353.

451. ***With pain will you bear children...*** By the bite of the painful Serpent, *Shekhinah* is able to deliver. Now Rabbi Shim'on indicates that the Serpent enables *Shekhinah* to deliver new souls into the world.

452. ***At the opening crouches sin...*** The sinful Serpent lurks *at the opening* of *Shekhinah*'s womb. He is forced to withdraw if an emerging soul is destined for a holy body; but otherwise he bites, defiling the flow, and the soul is blemished.

"That river" renders נהר ההוא (*ha-hu nahar*), which appears in Ms24, O17, *Or Yaqar*, and the Mantua and Cremona editions. In later printed editions, this is replaced by אתר ההוא (*ha-hu atar*), "that place," referring to *Shekhinah*'s womb.

The verse in Genesis reads: *At the opening crouches sin, and for you is its desire, but you will rule over it*. See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 45; BT *Berakhot* 61a; *Qiddushin* 30b, 61b; *Sanhedrin* 91b; *Niddah* 30b; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 16; *Midrash Tehillim* 119:64; *Zohar* 1:36b, 54b, 165b, 179a; 2:111b, 267b (*Heikh*).

453. **this one is over the body...** The demonic Other Side dominates the body, while *Shekhinah* influences the soul.

454. **This Serpent is destined to deliver…** When the time comes for the dead to be resurrected, the demonic Serpent will deliver bodies from their graves. This will happen toward the end of the sixth millennium—which is premature for a snake, whose normal period of gestation is seven years (or here, millennia), not six.

On the serpent's period of gestation, see BT *Bekhorot* 8a: "A viper bears at seventy years;… a serpent at seven years." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 20:4; *Zohar* 1:18a. The gestation period of snakes is actually several months.

The full verse in Isaiah 26 reads: *Your dead will live, my corpses will arise. Awake and shout for joy, O dwellers of the dust! For Your dew is a dew of lights, and the earth will give birth to* [or: *cast forth*] *spirits of the dead*.

455. **all in the land of Galilee…** Where, according to a midrashic tradition, the Messiah will appear. There, Israel's exile began, and there the final redemption will begin.

In 733–732 B.C.E., the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser conquered portions of the Galilee and exiled thousands of its inhabitants to Assyria. This marks the beginning of the Diaspora of the ten northern tribes. See 2 Kings 15:29.

Actually, the Galilee was not included in the territory of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (Joseph's two sons). See *Nitsotsei Zohar*. On Joseph, see the following paragraph. On the Messiah's appearance in the Galilee, see *Leqaḥ Tov*, Numbers 24:17; *Zohar* 1:119a; 2:7b, 8b–9a. Cf. BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 31b; *Nitsotsei Zohar*.

According to the view here, only Israel will be resurrected. See Baḥya ben Asher on Deuteronomy 33:28. In the verse from Amos, *Joseph* represents the entire Northern Kingdom of Israel.

456. **Why will they rise there?…** The dead will be resurrected in the Galilee because that is (supposedly) the portion of Joseph, who, by withstanding the sexual advances of Potiphar's wife, proved his virtue, "preserved the

covenant” of circumcision, and attained the rung of *Yesod* (the divine phallus). Fittingly, Joseph was buried בארון (*ba-aron*), *in a coffin*, since *aron* also means “ark,” symbolizing *Shekhinah*. See above, notes 339–40.

457. **they will each go…** To their original tribal territory.

On the expansion of Jerusalem, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 1; *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 10:9; BT *Pesaḥim* 50a, *Bava Batra* 75b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:22; 20:7; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:5; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 1, 2a; 21, 103b; 41, 172b–173a; *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 14, *Tsav* 16; *Zohar* 2:234a; 3:56a.

The full verse in Leviticus reads: *You shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim freedom* [or: *a release*] *in the land to all of its inhabitants. A jubilee it shall be for you, and you shall go back each man to his holding, and each man to his clan you shall go back*.

458. **to the heights of Rome…** The center of Christendom, where the study of Torah will finally prevail.

Cf. *Zohar* 2:236a, 238b; 3:252a (*RM*); *TZ* 21, 50b; 37, 78b. For the full verse in Isaiah, see above, note 454.

1. ***These are the reckonings of the Dwelling…*** Rabbi Ḥiyya links this opening verse of the Torah portion to the verse in Ecclesiastes. *The streams* symbolize the *sefirot* flowing into *the sea* of *Shekhinah*, who conveys the vivifying waters below ("in the other direction") to the angelic *beasts of the field*. *Shekhinah*, who is also symbolized by *the Dwelling* [or: *Tabernacle*], counts and reckons all of these lower forces, as intimated by the wording *These are the reckonings of the Dwelling*.

The full verse reads: *These are* פקודי (*phequdei*), *the reckonings* [or: *inventory, tally, records, accounts, accountings*] *of, the Dwelling, the Dwelling of Testimony, that were reckoned by the mouth* [or: *word*] *of Moses—the service of the Levites in the hand of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest*.

The verse in Ecclesiastes reads: *All the streams flow to the sea, yet the sea is not full; to the place* [*from*] *which the streams flow, there they flow back again* [or: *to the place the streams flow, there they continue to flow*]. The simple sense of the verse may reflect the popular belief that the water flowing into the sea from rivers flows back to those rivers through tunnels. Here, Rabbi Ḥiyya understands it to mean that the waters continue to flow into the sea. On earlier rabbinic interpretations of the verse, see *Qohelet Rabbah*, ad loc. In the *Zohar* it is expounded frequently, e.g., 1:19b, 29a; 2:30a; 3:57b–58a.

The context in Psalms (104:10–11) reads: *Letting loose springs in streams, among the mountains they go. They water all beasts of the field, wild asses slake their thirst*. See *Zohar* 3:181a. The full verse in Isaiah, referring originally to the stars and constellations, reads: *Lift your eyes on high and see: Who created these? The one who brings forth their array by number and calls them each by name: because of His great might and vast power, not one is missing*.

2. ***How abundant Your goodness…*** On this verse, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 307; *Zohar* 1:7a, 46a, 47a; 2:127a; 3:88a, 173b, 264a.

On the image of the net, see M *Avot* 3:16, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: "All is given on pledge, and a net is spread over all the living; the store is open, and the storekeeper gives credit; the ledger is open, and the hand writes; whoever wishes to borrow may come and borrow, but the collectors go around regularly every day and exact payment from the person, whether or not he realizes, and they have authority on which they can rely, and the judgment is true; and all is prepared for the banquet."

3. **A wheel spins constantly…** The image of the wheel includes elements of the celestial sphere (which "spins constantly") and the wheel of fate ("ascending and descending"). "Those whose feet are pushed [or: who push their feet] away from the wheel" are those who stray from proper conduct.

According to Rabbi Yose, the *goodness* that God has *hidden* for the righteous is identical with the primordial light that *was good* and was hidden away. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 11:7 (in the name of Rabbi Yehudah son of Rabbi Simon): "With the light created by the blessed Holy One on the first day, one could gaze and see from one end of the universe to the other. When the Holy One foresaw the corruption of the generation of Enosh and the generation of the Flood, He hid it away from them, as is written: *The light of the wicked is withheld* (Job 38:15). Where did He hide it? In the Garden of Eden: *Light is sown for the righteous, joy for the upright in heart*."

On the wheel, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 2:4; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 34:3, 9; BT *Shabbat* 151b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 1:5, 7; *Zohar* 1:109b–110a; 2:95b–96b (Vol. 5, pp. 7–8, n. 22), 235b (*Tos*); Liebes, *Peraqim*, 299–300, 327–31.

On the hidden light, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 3:6; 41:3; BT *Ḥagigah* 12a; *Shemot Rabbah* 35:1; *Tanḥuma, Shemini*, 9; *Bahir* 97–98 (147); *Zohar* 1:7a, 31b–32a, 45b–46a, 47a, 59a, 121b (*MhN*), 131a, 203b; 2:35a, 78b, 127a–b, 147b, 148b–149a 166b–167a, 224b; 3:34a, 88a, 173b; *ZḤ* 85a–b (*MhN*, *Rut*).

4. **First, *You have hidden*...** First the verse describes the *goodness* as *hidden*, and then it continues: *You have wrought*, implying that God acted with it. How can both be true? Rabbi Yose explains that *You have hidden* refers to what has just been said (namely that God hid the primordial light away for the righteous), while *You have wrought* implies that this hidden light provided the energy by which God fashioned the world.

The primordial light is identical with *Ḥesed*, symbolized by Abraham, whose name appears (by an anagram) in the verse from Genesis. Now this verse implies that באברהם (*be-Avraham*), "through [the primordial light of] Abraham," God created the world.

The anagram בהבראם (*be-hibbare'am*), *when they were created*—באברהם (*be-Avraham*), "through Abraham," appears in *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:9. There, according to Rabbi Yehoshu'a son of Korḥah, it indicates that *heaven and earth* were created for Abraham's sake. See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 16; *Lekh Lekha* 4; *Zohar* 1:3b, 86b, 91b, 93a, 105b, 128b, 154b, 230b, 247a; 2:31a, 48b, 79a; 3:31a, 38a, 117a, 298a. On the creative power of the hidden light, see *Zohar* 2:149a, 166b–167a. Cf. 2:127a.

5. **it is their sustenance...** The hidden light sustains and renews Creation continually. See *Zohar* 2:149a, 166b–167a. Cf. the morning liturgy: "Lord of wonders, who renews in His goodness every day continually the act of Creation."

6. **Artistry of the world... of the Dwelling...** The Dwelling corresponds to the entire world. Rabbi Yose demonstrates this by a verbal analogy between the verse in

Exodus and the verse in Genesis, both of which open with the word אלה (*elleh*), *these*. Both the world and the Dwelling were formed by the power of the hidden light.

Bezalel was the chief artisan of the Dwelling, and several elements of his full name allude to the primordial light of *Ḥesed* on the right side. First of all, the name בצלאל (*Betsal'el*) can be read as בצל אל (*be-tsel El*), "in the shadow of God," and the divine name *El* (God) alludes to *Ḥesed*. His father's name, אורי (*Uri*), derives from אור (*or*), "light," while his grandfather's name, חור (*Ḥur*), suggests Aramaic חיור (*ḥivvar*), "white."

Bezalel's associate, Oholiab, was from the tribe of Dan, whose name derives from דין (*din*), "judgment," signifying the left side. Thus, the Dwelling was comprised of both left and right. Moses symbolizes *Tif'eret*, the mediating *sefirah*, so he balanced the polar opposites and finally erected the Dwelling.

On the correspondence between the Dwelling and the cosmos, see BT *Berakhot* 55a; *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 2–3; *Tanḥuma* (Buher), *Vayaqhel* 6; *Midrash Tadshe* 2 (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:164–67); Naḥmanides on Exodus 31:2; *Zohar* 1:129a (*MhN*); 2:127a, 140b, 149a, 162b, 222b, 231b, 235b, 277a; *ZḤ* 42d; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:872–74.

On *Betsal'el* as *be-tsel El*, see BT *Berakhot* 55a; *Qohelet Rabbah* on 7:11; *Tanḥuma, Beha'alotekha* 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Beha'alotekha* 11; *Shemot Rabbah* 34:1; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 15:10. On the sefirotic significance of Bezalel and Oholiab, see above, p. 223, n. 345; *Zohar* 2:222a, 223a–224a, 236a. On the Dwelling comprising right, left, and middle, see *Zohar* 2:148b.

The context in Exodus (38:22–23) reads: *Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur from the tribe of Judah made all that YHVH had commanded Moses. And with him was Oholiab son of Ahisamach from the tribe of Dan, carver and designer and embroiderer in violet, purple, and crimson and in linen*. The

terms *violet, purple*, and *crimson* refer to dyed yarns. On תכלת (*tekhelet*), "violet" (or "bluish purple"), see above, p. 125, n. 50.

7. ***In love will a throne be established…*** Rabbi El'azar applies this verse to the process of emanation. When Divine Thought (*Ḥokhmah*) emerges from *Keter* (known as Will)—or from Concealed of all Concealed (*Keter* or *Ein Sof*)—it is stimulated and then enters the palace of *Binah*, the Divine Mother. From Her, lights issue to *Ḥesed* (*love*) on the right, which conveys them to the other *sefirot* until finally the Throne (*Shekhinah*) is established. See *Zohar* 1:29b; 2:234b.

8. ***He will sit upon it in truth…*** The Divine Male sits upon the Throne (*Shekhinah*) through the quality of *truth*, which symbolizes *Tif'eret*, the blessed Holy One. According to rabbinic tradition, "the seal of the blessed Holy One is truth."

See JT *Sanhedrin* 1:1, 18a; *Bereshit Rabbah* 81:2; BT *Shabbat* 55a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:9; *Devarim Rabbah* 1:10; *Shemot Rabbah* 4:13.

9. ***In the tent of David…*** Alluding to *Shekhinah*, the Throne. *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom) is often associated with the ideal king, David.

10. ***Judging and seeking justice…*** The opening of the verse (*In love*) refers to *Ḥesed*. Now Rabbi El'azar applies the conclusion of the verse to other *sefirot*. *Judging* alludes to *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment). *Seeking justice* refers to a more balanced judgment, tempered by Compassion, the quality of *Tif'eret*. *Righteousness* is one of the many names of *Shekhinah*, who is also known as the Lower Court (in distinction from *Gevurah*, the Upper Court).

11. **Similarly, the Dwelling…** The משכן (*mishkan*), "Dwelling," symbolizes *Shekhinah*, and just as She is established *in love*, on the side of *Ḥesed*, so is the Dwelling.

"Generations were enumerated" refers to the inventory of all the materials and elements of the Dwelling in Exodus 38–39.

12. ***In the beginning…*** God fashioned the world after the pattern of the *sefirot*, and the two realms remain linked. On the kabbalistic interpretation of Genesis 1:1, see *Zohar* 1:15a.

13. **He gazed into Torah and created it…** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:1, in the name of Rabbi Osha'ya: "The blessed Holy One gazed into Torah and created the world." In Kabbalah, Torah is pictured as God's name.

According to Rabbi Shim'on, the biblical terms *wisdom, understanding*, and *knowledge* refer to the upper sefirotic triad of *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom), *Binah* (Understanding), and *Da'at* (Knowledge), by which all was eventually created. Since the Dwelling corresponds to the whole world, these three qualities also contributed to the Dwelling's construction and are mentioned specifically in the verse describing Bezalel's inspiration.

Fittingly, the opening verse of Genesis also alludes to *wisdom, understanding*, and *knowledge*. *In the beginning* matches *with wisdom*, as, in fact, it is translated in *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.); cf. Psalms 111:10 and Proverbs 4:7. Emanation proceeds from the primordial point of Wisdom. *God created* corresponds to *with understanding*, since *Elohim* (*God*) is a name of *Binah* (Understanding). *Heaven* corresponds to *with knowledge*, since *heaven* designates *Tif'eret*, who is linked with the hidden *sefirah, Da'at* (Knowledge).

In the opening verse of the Torah portion, Rabbi Shim'on also finds an allusion to these three *sefirot*. *These are* פקודי (*phequdei*), *the reckonings of, the Dwelling* refers to *Ḥokhmah*, perhaps because the root פקד (*pqd*) can mean "to appoint, give authority," and *Ḥokhmah* has authority over *Binah*, the upper Dwelling (as distinct from *Shekhinah*, the "lower" Dwelling). *The Dwelling of Testimony* refers to *Binah*. *That were reckoned by the mouth of Moses* refers to *Da'at*, who is linked with *Tif'eret*, symbolized by Moses. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:910; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On Torah's role in Creation, see M *Avot* 3:14; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 29; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 5; *Zohar* 1:5a, 47a, 134a–b; 2:161a, 200a; 3:35b, 152a, 178a; Wolfson, *Philo*, 1:242–45, 266–69. On Torah as God's name, see above, pp. 238–39, n. 397.

On the correspondence between the Dwelling and the cosmos, see above, note 6. On the creative function of *wisdom, understanding* and *knowledge*, (and the comparison between the verses in Proverbs and the verse in Exodus 31 or its parallel in Exodus 35:31), see BT *Berakhot* 55a; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayaqhel* 6; *Shemot Rabbah* 48:4.

14. **Moses stood bewildered...** Until God showed him the paradigm of each component of the Dwelling within *Shekhinah*, the Dwelling above.

On Moses' vision of various components of the Tabernacle, see *Sifrei Zuta* 8:4; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:8; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20, 98a–b; *Shemot Rabbah* 35:6; *Zohar* 1:239a; 2:157b–158a (*RM*), 241a; and the passage from BT *Menahot* 29a (and parallels) cited in the following note.

15. ***That you* מראה (*mar'eh*), *are being shown*...** The unusual form מָרְאֶה (*mar'eh*), *are being shown*, alludes to מָרְאָה (*mar'ah*), "mirror," namely *Shekhinah*, who is known as "the speculum that does not shine." She showed Moses the various forms within Herself.

Shekhinah is also known as אתה (*attah*), *you*, because She is the most accessible of all the *sefirot* and can be addressed directly. She is present to one who seeks Her. Rabbi Shim'on may be reading the verse as: *You* [*Shekhinah*] *are being revealed*; or, *You are* מָרְאָה (*mar'ah*), *a mirror*; or, *You* מָרְאָה (*mar'ah*), *are showing*.

Moses, though, was perplexed—how could he possibly replicate the spiritual forms on earth? God then reassured him that the Dwelling did not have to be identical with the heavenly paradigm, rather symbolically similar—as if to say:

“You, follow the pattern as best you can, and I will reign in Glory [or: and thus I will be glorified].” The actual wording of the divine reassurance—“You with your signs…”—derives from midrashic sources, where instead of בסימניך (*be-simanekha*), “with your signs,” the correct reading is בסממניך (*be-samemanekha*), “with your colored dyes.” See *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; *Shemot Rabbah* 35:6; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:8.

On Moses’ difficulty in understanding an aspect of the Dwelling, see BT *Menaḥot* 29a: “It was taught in the school of Rabbi Yishma’el: Three things were too difficult for Moses until the blessed Holy One showed him with His finger, namely [how to construct] the lamp stand [in the Dwelling], [how to recognize precisely] the new moon, and [how to determine which] creeping things [are pure and impure].”

See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 1; *Sifrei*, Numbers 61; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:14; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 6, 8; *Beha’alotekha* 3, 6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemini* 11; *Beha’alotekha* 4, 11; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 15:4, 10; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15, 78a; *Shemot Rabbah* 15:28; *Zohar* 2:140b, 157b–158a (*RM*), 241a.

“Speculum” renders אספקלריא (*ispaqlarya*), “speculum, glass, mirror, lens,” deriving from Greek *speklon*, “mirror, window-pane,” and Latin *speculum*, “mirror.” See BT *Yevamot* 49b: “All the prophets gazed through an opaque glass [literally: an *ispaqlarya* that does not shine], whereas Moses our teacher gazed through a translucent glass [literally: an *ispaqlarya* that shines].”

In the *Zohar, Shekhinah* is a speculum that does not shine on its own but rather reflects and transmits the other *sefirot*. Cf. 1 Corinthians 13:12: “For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face-to-face.” See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 1:14; Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 33–34; Naḥmanides on Exodus 6:2; *Zohar* 1:33b, 120a, 183a; 2:23b, 129b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 69 (87); Ginzberg,

Legends, 6:44–45, n. 242; Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines*, index, s.v. "speculum"; Huss, "Ḥakham Adif mi-Navi," 109–14; idem, *Ke-Zohar ha-Raqi'a*, 17–21.

On *Shekhinah* as *attah, you*, see above, p. 1, n. 2. "Mirror" renders חיזו (*ḥeizu*), which normally means "vision, appearance," but in the *Zohar* also "mirror." Cf. מראה (*mar'ah*), which means both "vision" and "mirror." See *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Exodus 38:8; *Zohar* 1:88b, 91a, 149b, 183a, 196a, 203a; 2:23a, 70b, 267a.

"[Shiny] bar of metal" renders עששיתא (*ashashita*), "bar of metal, glass, glass lantern." See *Zohar* 1:33b; 2:23a, 82a, 130b, 186b; *ZḤ* 41c, 63b (*ShS*); Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Avodat Kokhavim* 11:6; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 97 (124); Ben-Yehuda, *Dictionary*, s.v. עששית (*ashashit*).

16. **Moses had to account for everything...** Therefore all the precious materials were reckoned, and the Holy Spirit offered confirmation.

See *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 5, 7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pequdei* 1, 4; *Shemot Rabbah* 51:1–2, 6. On the verse in Numbers, see also M *Sheqalim* 3:2. The context in Exodus (38:24–25) reads: *All the gold that was used* [or: *fashioned*] *for the work, in all the work of the sanctuary—the gold of the elevation offering—was twenty-nine talents and seven hundred thirty shekels by the sanctuary shekel. And the sliver reckoned from the community was a hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels by the sanctuary shekel.*

17. **the Other Side would go roaming...** Scrutinizing the behavior of the artisans, trying to find some misconduct or theft. Eventually, God compelled him to confirm their trustworthiness by rendering an account of all the precious materials that had been used. The demonic force himself was *reckoned* among those who were present at the accounting.

The verse in Isaiah reads literally *Can a woman forget her suckling, or feel no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these* [or: *she*] *may forget, yet I will not forget you*. In rabbinic literature, the phrase *these may forget* is understood to mean "the sin of the Golden Calf *will be forgotten*," based on the fact that the word *these* figures prominently in the account of the Golden Calf: *These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!* (Exodus 32:4). Here, for Rabbi Shim'on, *these* alludes to the Other Side (the source of idolatry); *these are the reckonings* implies that the demonic force was compelled to participate in the reckoning.

On the significance of *these* in the verses from Isaiah and Exodus 32, see BT *Berakhot* 32b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 17:7; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 31, 146a; *Zohar* 1:228a; 2:236b. Cf. *Targum Yonatan* on Isaiah 49:15.

18. ***the Dwelling, the Dwelling of Testimony…*** The repetition of the word *Dwelling* indicates there are two Dwellings: *Binah* and *Shekhinah*. *Testimony* alludes to *Binah*—or *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, who are known by the divine name יה (*Yah*), since י (*yod*) symbolizes *Ḥokhmah* and ה (*he*) symbolizes *Binah*. The verse in Psalm 122 links *Yah* with *testimony*, while the verse in Psalm 81 includes the name *Yah* within Joseph's expanded name יהוסף (*Yehosef*), "testifying" to his virtue (in withstanding the sexual advances of Potiphar's wife), or testifying that emanation flows from the hidden realm of *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah* into *Yesod* (symbolized by Joseph).

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the sefirotic significance of *testimony* (which can also refer to *Yesod*), see *Zohar* 2:229b; 3:213b; *ZḤ* 26d, 45b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 285 (and Wolfson's n. 2). On the divine element within Joseph's expanded name in Psalm 81, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 23:10; BT *Sotah* 10b, 36b; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 17, pp. 321–22; *Midrash Tehillim* 81:7; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:5; *Zohar* 3:14a, 213b.

The full verse in Psalm 122 reads: *There tribes ascend, the tribes of Yah, a testimony to Israel, to praise the name of YHVH. The verse* in Psalm 81 reads: *A testimony He ordained it in* [or: *for*] *Joseph, when He went forth against the land of Egypt*.

19. ***That were reckoned by the mouth of Moses…*** After the death of Jacob (the last of the patriarchs) and his sons (progenitors of the twelve tribes), Israel suffered the exile of Egypt and forgot the divine name *Yah* (linked with *Testimony*). Eventually, at the Burning Bush, Moses recalled it, or learned it from God.

Rabbi Shim'on is apparently playing on two different meanings of the root פקד (*pqd*), "reckon" and "remember." Soncino translates the last sentence here: "It was there that that Name was entrusted to the mouth of Moses," drawing on another meaning of the root *pqd*, "to entrust."

On the creative power of the name *Yah*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:10: "כי ביה יהוה צור עולמים (*Ki be-Yah YHVH tsur olamim*), *For by Yah YHVH, an eternal rock* (Isaiah 26:4)—with these two letters the blessed Holy One created His world [interpreting the verse as: *For* ביה (*be-Yah*), *by* (the letters) ה י (*yod, he*), *YHVH* צר עולמים (*tsar olamim*), *formed worlds*]…. This world was created by ה (*he*)…. and the world that is coming was created by י (*yod*)."

See JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77c; BT *Menaḥot* 29b; *Alfa Beita de-Rabbi Aqiva* (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:363); *Midrash Aggadah*, Genesis 1:1; *Tosafot* on *Berakhot* 51a, s.v. *zokheh*; *Zohar* 1:140a, 141b; 2:22b, 126b; 3:290b (*IZ*).

The full verse in Exodus 3 reads: *Moses said to God, "Look, when I come to the Children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?"* In the following verse, God reveals not the name *Yah* but rather אהיה (*Ehyeh*), *I am* [or: *I will be*], which includes the letters ה י (*yod, he*). See *Nitsotsei Orot*.

20. ***The Levite will serve* הוא (*hu*), *he*...** In its simple sense, the verse in Numbers means *The Levite, he alone, will serve* [*at the Tent of Meeting*]. Here, it is understood as *The Levite* (symbolizing *Gevurah*) *will serve hu, he* (namely *Binah*). The pronoun *hu, he*, alludes to the hidden realm of *Binah* because this *sefirah* cannot be addressed directly (in the second person) but only indirectly (in the third). *Shekhinah*, who is more revealed and accessible, is known by the pronoun אתה (*attah*), *you*.

On the sefirotic reading of the verse in Numbers, see *Zohar* 1:154b; 2:114a; 3:171a, 178a–b, 183b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 97. On *Binah* as *hu*, see also *Zohar* 1:67a, 156b, 157b (*ST*), 158b, 233a, 241a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 98. (Although *Binah* is often pictured as the Divine Mother, She is also characterized as World of the Male. See Vol. 5, p. 48, n. 132.) On *Shekhinah* as *attah*, see above, note 15; p. 1, n. 2. For the full verse in Exodus 38, see above, note 1.

21. **for they carry the Dwelling...** Rabbi Shim'on concludes with a more down-to-earth interpretation. Among the three Levitical clans, *the sons of Kohath* were entrusted with carrying the most sacred objects of the Dwelling on their shoulders. Consequently, in contrast to the other two clans (who transported the Dwelling's structure and curtains), *the sons of Kohath* were not given any wagons.

22. ***On that day...*** When the Messiah appears. The Tree of Life is the tree of the *sefirot*, specifically *Tif'eret*, while its root here apparently symbolizes *Yesod*. On "the root of the Tree of Life," see Jacob ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Peirush ha-Otiyyot*, 205.

23. ***And his resting place will be glorious...*** *Yesod* will join and rest upon *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the Temple (and the Dwelling). Although the term כבוד (*kavod*), "glory," can apply to *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the sun), in Messianic time it will apply to *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the moon), whose light will then match Her partner's. *Shekhinah*'s

current state of being "susceptible to calculation" is exemplified by *the reckonings of the Dwelling*, when the Tabernacle was first erected. However, the Messianic Temple will be boundless.

On the Temple (or Zion) as *resting place*, see Psalms 132:14; below, note 392. On "glory" referring to *Tif'eret*, see *Zohar* 1:237a; 2:162a. On *Shekhinah* as being associated with calculation, see *Zohar* 1:46b (Vol. 1, p. 248, n. 1105); 3:220b.

On the incompatibility of blessings with that which can be counted, see BT *Ta'anit* 8b: "Blessing is not found in anything weighed, measured, or counted, but only in that which is hidden from the eye." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 64:6; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 10:6; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 25, 127b; *Tanḥuma, Re'eh* 14; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Re'eh* 12; *Zohar* 1:5a, 64b, 202a; 2:187b, 219a, 225a, 227b; 3:117b.

The verse in Isaiah reads: *The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold, as the light of the seven days* [of Creation], See BT *Ḥullin* 60b (quoted above, p. 255, n. 450).

24. **it needed the prayer of Moses...** Normally, anything that can be calculated cannot receive blessing, so the Dwelling (which was reckoned) needed the prayer of Moses, who symbolizes *Tif'eret*. To ensure the flow of blessing, Moses bound *the Dwelling* (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) to *the Dwelling of Testimony* (symbolizing *Binah*).

In the last sentence of this paragraph, the subject of "they could not have done it" is the artisans. The full verse in Exodus 39 reads: *Moses saw all the tasks, and, look, they had done it as YHVH had commanded, thus they had done it, and Moses blessed them*. On the wording of Moses' blessing, see *Sifra, Shemini, millu'im* 15, 44c; *Sifrei*, Numbers 143; *Tosefta Menaḥot* 7:8; and *Seder Olam Rabbah* 6, in all of which "*Shekhinah*" takes the place of "blessing." On *the Dwelling* and *the Dwelling of the Testimony*, see above, notes 13, 18.

25. ***Rise, go to Zarephath of Sidon…*** Elijah prophesied to King Ahab, *As YHVH lives, the God of Israel whom I serve, there will be no dew or rain these years except by my word* (1 Kings 17:1). God then told Elijah to flee and hide east of the Jordan, where ravens miraculously provided him with bread and meat daily. Afterward, God instructed the prophet to go to a certain widow who would continue to sustain him. Rabbi Abba explains that previously God had decreed both of these acts of sustenance.

In the clause *until the day that YHVH* תת (*tet*), *gives, rain* (1 Kings 17:14), the Masoretic text records the spelling תתן (*titten*), *you will give*, which is corrected to be read as *tet, gives*. Rabbi Abba upholds the spelling *titten, you will give*, explaining that this refers to the widow, whose great merit ensures the eventual rainfall: she herself, in effect, *will give rain*. (The correct second-person feminine form is actually תתני [*titteni*].)

On Elijah's sustenance, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:5; *Zohar* 2:199a. The verse in Kings reads: *The word of YHVH came to him, saying, "Rise…."*

26. ***The jar of flour was not used up…*** Normally, that which is measured cannot receive blessing. (See above, note 23.) Rabbi Abba reasons that, seeing as how the measure of flour did not run out of blessings by virtue of Elijah's words, all the more so should blessings abide in the Dwelling, which was reckoned by none other than Moses.

27. ***Come no closer here. Remove your sandals from your feet…*** According to a rabbinic tradition, as a consequence of Moses' direct encounter with God he abstained from sexual relations with his wife. Moses became, as it were, the husband of *Shekhinah* (or "chief steward of the [divine] house"), and whatever he commanded was fulfilled by God, as in the case of the miraculous punishment of the rebels who followed Korah, or in the journeying of the ark. Rabbi Ḥizkiyah interprets

the phrase *that* פקד (*puqqad*), *were reckoned, by the word of Moses* according to one of the various meanings of the root פקד (*pqd*): "to command." *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the Dwelling) was commanded by her husband, Moses.

See *Midrash Tehillim* 90:5, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish: "Why is he [Moses] called איש האלהים (*ish ha-elohim*), *man* [or: *husband*] *of Elohim* (Psalms 90:1)? Just as a husband can, if he wishes, annul his wife's vow, or, if he wishes, let it stand—as is said: אישה (*ishah*), *Her husband, may let it stand or her husband may annul it* (Numbers 30:14)—so, as it were, Moses said to the blessed Holy One, *Arise, O YHVH*! *Return, O YHVH*! (ibid. 10:35–36)."

On Moses' celibacy, see *Sifrei*, Numbers 99–100, 103; *Sifrei Zuta* 12:1; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Numbers 12:8; Deuteronomy 5:27–28; BT *Shabbat* 87a (and *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *ve-attah*), *Yevamot* 62a (and *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *di-khtiv*); *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 2; B, 2; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46; *Devarim Rabbah* 11:10; *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 13; *Shemot Rabbah* 19:3; 46:3; Rashi on Numbers 12:8; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 7:6; *Zohar* 1:21b–22a, 152b, 234b; 3:148a, 180a, 261b; *ZḤ* 59b, 72d–73a (*ShS*).

On God's command *Remove your sandals from your feet* as implying sexual abstinence, see *Zohar* 3:148a, 180a; *ZḤ* 59b, 72d (*ShS*); Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 3:5, n. 94. Cf. 2 Samuel 11:8, 11; *Zohar* 1:8b, 112b. On Moses as the husband of *Shekhinah*, see above, pp. 103–4, n. 128.

Numbers 16:30 (referring to the rebels who followed Korah) reads in full: *But if a new thing YHVH should create, and the ground gapes open its mouth and swallows them and all of theirs and they go down alive to Sheol, you will know that these men have despised YHVH*. The two verses in Numbers 10 read: *As the ark journeyed, Moses would say, "Arise, O YHVH! May Your enemies be scattered, and Your foes flee before You!" And when it came to rest, he would say, "Return, O YHVH, to the myriads of thousands of Israel!"*

28. **here existed פקידא (*peqida*), taking account…** Rabbi Ḥizkiyah plays with various meanings of the root פקד (*pqd*): "to reckon, take account of, (and perhaps) command." Moses, symbolizing the divine voice (*Tif'eret*) uttered speech (*Shekhinah*), "taking account of Her" and bringing Her forth from the exile of Egypt (which She shared with Her people). Now "She was taken account of" (or "commanded") so that She would abide among Israel in the Dwelling.

The verse in Exodus 3 reads: *I have surely taken account of you and what is being done to you in Egypt*.

29. ***Bezalel son of Uri…*** Bezalel symbolizes *Ḥesed* on the right side, from whom emanation flows to *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the Dwelling. Bezalel was descended from Judah, ancestor of the Davidic kings and linked with *Malkhut* (Kingdom).

The name בצלאל (*Betsal'el*) can be read as בצל אל (*be-tsel El*), "in the shadow of God," alluding to *Ḥesed*, known as *El* (God). Furthermore, *Ḥesed* is located directly beneath *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom), which inspired Bezalel to fashion the Dwelling. By being in the divine shadow, Bezalel received wisdom.

On Bezalel symbolizing *Ḥesed* and the play on his name, see above, note 6. The context in Exodus (38:22–23) reads: *Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur from the tribe of Judah made all that YHVH had commanded Moses. And with him was Oholiab son of Ahisamach from the tribe of Dan, carver and designer and embroiderer in violet, purple, and crimson and in linen*.

30. ***Oholiab son of Ahisamach…*** Who symbolizes *Din* (Judgment) on the left side, as implied by the name of his tribe, דן (*Dan*). The Dwelling combined elements of both the right and left sides, symbolizing how *Shekhinah* is embraced by the right and left divine arms.

For the full verse in Exodus, see the end of the preceding note. On Oholiab, see above, note 6.

31. ***Beautiful in loftiness…*** Before interpreting this verse, Rabbi Yehudah describes the Foundation Stone, from

which the world was created. The single point of the upper edge of this stone is located in the Holy of Holies and symbolizes *Shekhinah*.

See *Tanḥuma, Qedoshim* 10: "The land of Israel sits in the center of the world, Jerusalem in the center of the land of Israel, the Temple in the center of Jerusalem, the sanctuary in the center of the Temple, the ark in the center of the sanctuary, and in front of the ark the Foundation Stone, from which the world was founded." See above, pp. 36–37, n. 93.

On the Foundation Stone, see M *Yoma* 5:2; *Tosefta Yoma* 2:14; JT *Yoma* 5:2, 42c; BT *Yoma* 54b; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 28:30; *Targum*, Song of Songs 4:12; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 20:4; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 26:4; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 35; *Midrash Konen* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 2:24–25); *Zohar* 1:71b–72a, 231a; 2:50a–b (*Mat*), 91b, 152a; *ZḤ* 2b (*MhN*), 28a (*MhN*), 76b (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 333; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:14–16, n. 39; Vol. 4, p. 248, n. 183.

The verb אשתיל (*ishetil*), "was planted" (rendered here "disseminated"), is a play on the rabbinic wording (in a number of the sources cited above, with variations): "from which the world הושתת (*hushtat*), was founded." See *Zohar* 1:72a, 78a, 82a, 231a; 2:48b; *ZḤ* 28a (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 74–75 (95); Liebes, *Peraqim*, 372–73. On שתיה (*shetiyyah*) as שת יה (*shat Yah*), "*Yah* set," see *Zohar* 1:231a.

The full verse in Psalms reads: *Beautiful in loftiness, joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, uttermost of the north, city of the great King*.

32. **this mystery is the colors of the eye...** The white of the sclera surrounds the color of the iris, which surrounds the pupil—"the central point," where the power of vision is located. This central point corresponds to the Foundation Stone, which is the central point of the world and site of the Holy of Holies—symbolizing *Shekhinah*, who

reflects all the *sefirot* and includes within Herself images of all being.

On the significance of the eye, see *Derekh Erets Zuta* 9:13 (*Derekh Erets*, ed. Higger, 7:38), in the name of Shemu'el the Small: "This world resembles a human eyeball. The white in it [i.e., the sclera] is the ocean, surrounding the whole world. The black in it [i.e., the iris] is the [inhabited] world. The pit in the black [i.e., the pupil] is Jerusalem. The visage in the pit [i.e., the reflection of one's own "face" seen in the pupil of another person's eye] is the Temple, may it be rebuilt speedily in our days and in the days of all Israel. Amen."

See Azriel of Gerona, *Peirush ha-Aggadot*, 60, 95; *Zohar* 1:97a–b (*ST*), 226a; 2:23b; 3:169a. The כפורת (*kapporet*), "purging cover," lay over the ark. For various interpretations of this passage, see Or *Yaqar*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:570–71; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

33. **until the Dwelling was built...** Only then did *Shekhinah* find Her abode in the world. Israel journeyed with the Dwelling until they entered the Holy Land, where eventually the Temple was built around the central point, where the ark (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) found its permanent *resting place*.

34. **This verse was uttered by Assembly of Israel...** *Shekhinah* announced that now She had found Her *resting place*. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 10, n. 25.

35. **The blessed Holy One utters it...** *Tif'eret* utters this verse when Israel's virtuous behavior stimulates His union with *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the Throne). Thereby He finds tranquility and turns compassionate.

36. **When all those artisans began...** The work was completed by itself, as implied by the passive voice: *All the work of the Dwelling of the Tent of Meeting was completed*. Similarly, *The heavens and the earth were completed* by themselves. However, the existence of the world remained

unfulfilled until the arrival of Sabbath. Thus *God completed* ביום השביעי (*ba-yom ha-shevi'i*)—understood here as *by the seventh day—His work that He had made*.

According to midrashic tradition, the lampstand in the Dwelling took shape miraculously by itself. See *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 8, *Beha'alotekha* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemini* 11, *Beha'alotekha* 4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 15:4; *Zohar* 1:74a. Similarly, the entire Dwelling was erected by itself; see *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pequdei* 8; *Shemot Rabbah* 52:4.

On the world being incomplete until the arrival of Sabbath, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 10:9. The context in Genesis (2:1–2) reads: *The heavens and the earth were completed, and all their array. God completed on the seventh day His work that He had done* [or: *made*], *and He ceased on the seventh day from all His work that He had done* [or: *made*].

37. **When the Temple was built…** Here too, the passive voice implies that the work miraculously completed itself. Rabbi Ḥiyya applies this principle to all holy work.

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:5 (on 1:1), in the name of Rabbi Berekhiah: "It is not written here *The House that they were building* but rather *The House, in its being built*. It was built by itself!"

See *Pesiqta Rabbati* 6, 25a; *Shemot Rabbah* 52:4; *Midrash Tehillim* 24:10; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:3; *Zohar* 1:74a; 2:226a. The full verse in Kings reads: *The House, in its being built, was built of stone dressed at the quarry, so no hammer, ax, or any iron tool was heard in the House while it was being built*.

38. ***And with him was Oholiab…*** Bezalel was the primary artisan, and Oholiab worked under him. This accords with the principle that the left side (symbolized by Oholiab) is included in the right (symbolized by Bezalel).

On the left being included in the right, see *Zohar* 1:17a, 119b, 243a; 2:26b, 52b, 57a–b, 66a, 81a, 162b, 168b–169a, 231a; 3:17b–18a, 24a, 118b, 176a, 178b, 236b, *ZḤ* 44a;

Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254; Wolfson, "Left Contained in the Right." On the sefirotic significance of Bezalel and Oholiab, see above, notes 6, 29–30.

39. ***These are the reckonings…*** The account of all the elements of the Dwelling fulfilled the work.

40. ***These…*** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:3, in the name of Rabbi Abbahu: "Wherever it is said *these are*, it invalidates the preceding, whereas *and these are* adds to the preceding." Here, according to Rabbi Yeisa, the wording *These are the reckonings* invalidates all other accounts of the world—meaning that whereas normally blessing cannot dwell in anything that is counted, in the case of the Dwelling the account itself drew down blessing.

On the principle "*These are* invalidates the preceding," see *Bereshit Rabbah* 30:3; *Shemot Rabbah* 1:2; 30:3; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 3:10; *Rut Rabbah* 8:1; *Tanḥuma, Shemot* 2, *Mishpatim* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemot* 3, *Mishpatim* 2; *Zohar* 1:59b; 2:16a (*MhN*). Cf. *Mekhilta, Nezikin* 1. On the incompatibility of blessings with that which can be counted, see above, note 23.

41. ***He will be the faithfulness of your times…*** One should not only study Torah at fixed *times* but also intend thereby to unite the divine couple: *Tif'eret* (known as the blessed Holy One and Heaven) and *Shekhinah* (known as *faithfulness*).

On the verse in Isaiah (as alluding to study), see BT *Shabbat* 31a; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer* 13, p. 216; *Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah* 15, p. 70; *Shemot Rabbah* 30:14; *Zohar* 1:127b (*MhN*).

42. ***Stronghold of salvation…*** *Strong-hold* refers to *Gevurah* (Power), the divine left hand known as *Din* (Judgment). *Salvation* alludes to *Ḥesed*, the divine right hand characterized here as Compassion, perhaps based on the verse *Save with Your right hand* (Psalms 60:7).

43. ***Wisdom and knowledge…*** *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom) is concealed within the palace of *Binah* and then settles upon

Da'at (Knowledge).

44. ***The awe of YHVH...*** *Shekhinah*, who receives all the upper sefirotic streams and measures them out below to sustain the world. The fertile location Heshbon (in the Transjordan) is here interpreted according to its homonym *ḥeshbon*, "reckoning, account."

45. **So She is called *faithfulness*...** *Shekhinah* faithfully transmits the flow of emanation below, accounting for everything. In all aspects She is faithful, for example, in restoring a person's soul each morning when he awakens. "If faithfulness must be demonstrated here" in the divine realm, "how much more so" in interpersonal relations on earth! This is why God publicized the faithfulness of the craftsmen, accounting for all the precious materials of the Dwelling.

46. **The name proves decisive...** The name בצלאל (*Betsal'el*) predestined him to fashion the Dwelling. This name can be read as בצל אל (*be-tsel El*), "in the shadow of God," suggesting that by being in the divine shadow he received wisdom. The name also alludes to his ability to fashion *tsel* (shade) for *El* (God), namely the shade of the Dwelling. Furthermore, the divine name *El* alludes to *Ḥesed*, which emanates to *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the Dwelling.

On *Betsal'el* as *be-tsel El*, see above, notes 6, 29. On the Dwelling as shade for God, see *Shemot Rabbah* 34:1; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Song of Songs 986. Cf. *Zohar* 2:128a.

On the decisiveness of a person's name, see BT *Berakhot* 7b: "How do we know that a name proves decisive? Rabbi El'azar said, 'For Scripture states: *Go, gaze upon the acts of YHVH, who has brought* שמות (*shammot*), *desolation, on earth*. Do not read: שמות (*shammot*), *desolation*, but rather: שמות (*shemot*), *names*.'" See *Zohar* 1:6a, 58b, 60a; 2:5a (*MhN*), 103a, 104a, 179b, 230a; 3:25a, 72a, 75b, 199b; *ZḤ* 73a (*ShS*).

47. **Judah was of the left side...** Rabbi Yose describes Bezalel's ancestor, Judah. As progenitor of the Davidic

kings, Judah was linked with *Malkhut* (Kingdom), who is influenced by the divine left side. He then succeeded in cleaving to the right side.

The Dwelling too began from the left side and then joined the right, since the list of its precious raw materials (in Exodus 25:3) begins with *gold* (symbolizing *Gevurah* on the left) and then proceeds to *silver* (symbolizing *Ḥesed* on the right). Eventually these two qualities merged, with the right side dominating.

The Torah, as well, proceeds in this fashion, as indicated by the description of revelation in Deuteronomy 33:2, which first mentions the divine *right hand* and then alludes to the left, symbolized by fire: *From His right hand, a fiery law for them*. The verse reads in full: *YHVH from Sinai appeared and from Seir He shone upon them; He radiated from Mount Paran and He came from myriads of holy ones; from His right hand, a fiery law for them*. See *Zohar* 1:198a, 243a; 2:81a, 84a–b, 135a, 166b, 206b; 3:176a.

48. **Reuben began from the right…** As Jacob and Leah's firstborn son, Reuben symbolizes the first of the seven lower *sefirot, Ḥesed*, on the right. However, when he sinned by sleeping with his father's concubine Bilhah (see Genesis 35:22), he "deviated to the left." Generations later, the tribes of Simeon and Gad (also associated with the left) journeyed together with the tribe of Reuben.

Judah, on the other hand, "began from the left and turned to the right," and so fittingly his descendant Bezalel made the Dwelling, whose list of precious materials begins with *gold* (symbolizing *Gevurah* on the left) and then proceeds to *silver* (symbolizing *Ḥesed* on the right). See the preceding note.

On God giving wisdom to Bezalel, see Exodus 31:3: *I have filled him* [i.e., Bezalel] *with the spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, and with knowledge*. On God giving wisdom to those who are already wise, see BT *Berakhot* 55a; *Mishnat Rabbi Eli'ezer*, 11, p. 218; *Qohelet*

Rabbah on 1:7; *Tanḥuma, Vayaqhel* 2; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Miqqets* 9; *Midrash Mishlei* 2:5; *Zohar* 2:157b. All these sources quote the verse in Exodus 31 and/or Daniel 2:21: *He gives wisdom to the wise*.

49. **Bezalel's name proved decisive…** See above, note 46.

50. בעלו **(*Be-tsillo*), *in his shade*…** Assonant with בצלאל (*Betsal'el*), Bezalel, whose name implies that he was בצל אל (*be-tsel El*), "in the shadow of God," and that he was destined to build the Dwelling, which served as *tsel* (shade) for *Shekhinah*. She (known as Assembly of Israel) utters the verse from Song of Songs, declaring how She delights to sit in this shade.

Rabbi Shim'on proceeds to identify Bezalel with *Yesod*, who generates fruit, namely souls of the righteous. The river of emanation, issuing from Eden (*Ḥokhmah*), attains full force in *Yesod*, who flows into *Shekhinah*, conveying new souls to Her and, through Her, to the world. *Yesod* says to *Shekhinah, From Me your fruit appears*. She declares, *His fruit is sweet to my mouth*.

On the name Bezalel and on the Dwelling as shade for God, see above, note 46. On the association of Bezalel with *Yesod*, see *Zohar* 2:152a, 214b, 224a, 225a; 3:162b.

On souls as fruit, see *Bahir* 14 (22); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 489, 504; *Zohar* 1:15b, 19a, 33a, 59b–60a, 82b, 85b, 90b, 115a–b, 226b, 238a, 249a; 2:166b–167a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 51; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 56 (69). Cf. Ibn Ezra on Psalms 1:3. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 10, n. 25.

51. **Bezalel… perfection of the Dwelling…** He fashioned the Dwelling, which provided *shade* for *Shekhinah*; and he symbolizes *Yesod*, who fulfills *Shekhinah*. *Yesod* balances right and left, and Bezalel's genealogy includes both these elements. His father's name, אורי (*Uri*), derives from אור (*or*), "light," signifying the light of *Ḥesed* on the right. His

grandfather's name, חור (*Ḥur*), suggests חורי (*ḥori*), "heat" of anger," alluding to the harsh quality of *Din* (Judgment) on the left.

According to a rabbinic tradition, at the beginning of the incident of the Golden Calf, Hur opposed the Israelites who demanded that Aaron fashion an idol for them, so they killed him. Here, Rabbi Shim'on explains that Hur's martyrdom atoned for Israel's sin, thereby fulfilling Judgment.

On Hur as symbolizing *Din*, see *Zohar* 2:66a; 3:181b. On Hur's death during the incident of the Golden Calf, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 10:3; BT *Sanhedrin* 7a; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Exodus 32:5; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 45; *Tanḥuma, Vayaqhel* 4, *Beha'alotekha* 14, *Tetsavveh* 10; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tissa* 11; *Vayaqhel* 4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 15:21; *Shemot Rabbah* 41:7; 48:3.

52. ***All the gold that was fashioned…*** Because of Israel's pure intention in donating the gold, it was considered to have already been *fashioned*. Conceivably, "*fashioned* (or *made*) and prepared previously" alludes to the tradition recorded in *Shemot Rabbah* 35:1 (in the name of Shim'on son of Lakish) that gold was originally created for the sake of the Dwelling and the Temple.

The gold that appeared in various components of the Dwelling symbolizes the quality of Judgment, which must balance Compassion. "Every single rung" may allude to various powers within *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the Dwelling. Actually, several components of the Dwelling contained no gold, for example, the bronze altar and laver.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *All the gold* העשוי (*he-asui*), *that was used* [or: *fashioned*], *for the work, in all the work of the sanctuary—the gold of the elevation offering—was twenty-nine talents and seven hundred thirty shekels by the sanctuary shekel*.

53. **the blessed Holy One desires Judgment…** He conducts the world by balancing Compassion and

Judgment. But why does He withhold Judgment from the wicked and not punish them as they deserve? Why do the wicked prosper?

54. **Many mountains have been uprooted…** The sages have wrestled with this problem of theodicy, employing ingenious dialectics in trying to solve it. But Rabbi Shim'on, the Holy Lamp, has explained that there are two different types of judgment. One is holy Judgment brought upon the righteous, which causes them to come even closer to God, thereby stimulating the joyous union of the divine couple. The wicked, however, embody an impure form of judgment—the dregs of the left side. God does not want to taint pure Judgment by bringing it upon the wicked, who are suffused with impure judgment. Rather, eventually the wicked succumb to the negative effects of their own sinfulness, and they are eliminated from the world and deprived of the world that is coming.

In the Talmud, Rav Yosef, who possessed an encyclopedic knowledge of the traditions, is referred to as "Sinai," while the keen dialectician Rabbah is called "Uprooter of Mountains." See BT *Berakhot* 64a, *Mo'ed Qatan* 12a, *Horayot* 14a; cf. *Sanhedrin* 74a. On Rabbi Shim'on's title, "the Holy Lamp," see above, p. 68, n. 38. On the problem of theodicy in the *Zohar*, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:1419–22.

55. ***When the wicked spring up like grass…*** The wicked may flourish momentarily, but they are doomed.

56. **another mystery here…** The wicked prosper here and now because this world belongs to the demonic Other Side, whereas the righteous will find their reward in the eternal holy world that is coming.

57. **Although Balak and Balaam…** When Balaam and King Balak of Moab offered sacrifices, they did not intend to serve God but rather to ensure the efficacy of Balaam's curses upon Israel. Still, even though the curses failed, the offerings brought by Balak and Balaam were rewarded and

Israel suffered. The very next chapter of Numbers describes how the Israelites went *whoring with the daughters of Moab* and worshiped the heathen god Baal Peor. As a result, twenty-four thousand Israelites died in a plague (Numbers 25:9), aside from those who were slain by the Israelite judges. Even so, the effects of those offerings lingered, demanding further retribution. "Until now" refers specifically to the time of the prophet Elisha, as soon becomes clear.

The last sentence refers to the seven altars built three times in different locations, totaling twenty-one altars. On each altar, a bull and a ram were sacrificed, totaling forty-two offerings. See Numbers 23.

On the effect of the offerings brought by Balak and Balaam, see BT *Sotah* 47a, in the name of Rav: "A person should always engage in Torah and *mitsvot* even if not for their own sake [i.e., even if done with the expectation of reward or for other ulterior motives], because by [engaging in them] not for their own sake he will eventually do so for their own sake. For as a reward for the forty-two sacrifices offered by Balak, king of Moab, he merited that Ruth should issue from him, and from her issued Solomon, of whom is written *A thousand ascent offerings Solomon offered* (1 Kings 3:4)."

The context in Numbers 25:4–5 reads: *YHVH said to the Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and impale them to YHVH, facing the sun, that YHVH's flaring wrath turn away from Israel." And Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Each of you kill his men who cling to Baal Peor."*

58. **Those forty-two offerings...** Balak and Balaam normally worshiped false gods, identified with the Other Side. In this case, they diverted their offerings from the Other Side toward God. Consequently, the Other Side felt cheated and he demanded restitution. Eventually, in the time of the prophet Elisha, he collected his due for the forty-two offerings through the power of a curse. The

context in 2 Kings (2:23–24) reads: *From there he* [i.e., Elisha] *went up to Bethel, and as he was going up the road, little boys came out of the city and jeered at him, saying, "Go away, baldhead! Go away, baldhead!" He turned behind him and saw them and cursed them in the name of YHVH. Then two bears came out of the woods and mangled forty-two of the children*. The forty-two children paid the price for the forty-two offerings, dying from Elisha's curse.

Rabbi Shim'on interprets *He turned behind him* as meaning that the Other Side, who stands *behind Shekhinah, turned*. Then, the Other Side *saw* that those children "deserved to be punished," *and he cursed them in the name of YHVH*—that is, to release God "from the debt of that offering brought to Him by that side," namely by Balak and Balaam, who represented the Other Side.

On the link between the forty-two sacrifices and the forty-two children, see BT *Sotah* 47a, in the name Rabbi Ḥanina: "On account of the forty-two sacrifices offered by Balak, king of Moab, forty-two children from Israel were mangled."

On *behind him* as meaning behind (or at the back of) *Shekhinah*, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 25; *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 19:26; Naḥmanides on Genesis 19:17; *Zohar* 1:108b. On the notion that the forty-two children deserved to be punished, see BT *Sotah* 46b; below at notes 63–68.

Conceivably, Rabbi Abba is implying that *the name of YHVH* alludes to the Name of Forty-two Letters. See Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 2:12; Vital; cf. Eleazar of Worms, *Sefer ha-Shem*, 109. (On this name, see above, p. 8, n. 21.) On nothing being lost, see *Zohar* 2:100a–b.

59. **David who fled from Saul…** When David fled from King Saul, he came to the town of Nob, where the priest Ahimelech provided him with bread and a weapon. In retaliation, Saul ordered the massacre of all the priests and inhabitants of Nob; only Abiathar, Ahimelech's son, escaped. According to rabbinic tradition, Saul's crime led to

the king's death in battle against the Philistines along with the death of his sons and thousands of Israelites. David too did not escape punishment, since he was indirectly responsible for the massacre; many years later, the Queen Mother Athaliah killed off all of the royal stock descended from David, except for Joash, who was hidden away and eventually became king.

Even so, the massacre at Nob was still not fully expiated, though God set a term of punishment for it, which was due to expire at the end of the day that King Sennacherib of Assyria stood at Nob, poised to attack Jerusalem. The phrase *Yet this day at Nob to stand* is interpreted: "*Yet this day* remained of the term in which an enemy could *stand* and attack on account of the sin committed *at Nob*." If Sennacherib had attacked before sundown, he would have destroyed Jerusalem; but he postponed the assault to the next day, letting his army rest, and that night—the term of punishment having expired—his forces were annihilated by an angel.

On David's flight to Nob and the massacre, see 1 Samuel 21–22. On the consequences of Saul's massacre, see BT *Sanhedrin* 95a–b. On the death of Saul and his sons, see 1 Samuel 31. On the killing of the royal stock except for Joash, see 2 Kings 11:1–3. The miraculous annihilation of Sennacherib's army is recounted in 2 Kings 19:35. Cf. *Zohar* 1:63b; 2:49b; *ZḤ* 81d–82a (*MhN, Rut*).

60. ***All the gold* העשוי (*he-asui*), *that was prepared*...** Since God foresaw that Israel would offer gold for fashioning the Golden Calf, He arranged for them to contribute their gold beforehand as an elevation offering for the Dwelling. Otherwise, if they still possessed gold when they demanded that Aaron fashion an idol, why would they have injured their ears by tearing off their golden earrings? Rather, they had already donated all their other gold for the Dwelling, and all they had left was their earrings.

According to the normal understanding of the sequence of events, the incident of the Golden Calf took place before God commanded Moses to solicit gold and other raw materials for the Dwelling from Israel. Yet, the divine command appears in Exodus 25, whereas the incident of the Golden Calf appears later, in Exodus 32. Here, Rabbi Shim'on assumes that God's command came first, preparing the remedy of gold before the sin involving gold.

On the divine command (to solicit contributions for the Dwelling) preceding the incident of the Golden Calf, see *Leqaḥ Tov*, Exodus 35:1, p. 210; Naḥmanides on Exodus 35:1; Leviticus 8:2; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 25:6; Vital; Kasher, *Torah Shelemah*, Exodus 25:8, nn. 71–72; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Scholem. Cf. *Zohar* 2:195a.

On God preparing a remedy in advance, see BT *Megillah* 13b; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 25:6. On Israel tearing their ears when they removed the earrings, see above, p. 85 at n. 85. The full verse in Exodus 38 reads: *All the gold* העשוי (*he-asui*), *that was used* [or: *fashioned*], *for the work, in all the work of the sanctuary—the gold of the elevation offering—was twenty-nine talents and seven hundred thirty shekels by the sanctuary shekel*.

61. **So, [*Bezalel*]...** Bezalel's ancestor Judah is linked with *Shekhinah*, or *Malkhuta* (Kingdom), as explained above, note 47; so it is fitting that Bezalel fashioned the Dwelling, which symbolizes *Shekhinah*. Moses then arranged everything, as described in Exodus 40:17–33.

Moses symbolizes *Tif'eret*, the trunk of the divine body, while Bezalel symbolizes *Yesod*, the divine phallus, known as "consummation of the body." Both *sefirot* are considered as one entity.

On Bezalel as symbolizing *Yesod*, see above, note 50. On *Yesod* as "consummation of the body," see *Zohar* 1:149b, 153b–154a, 158a, 162b, 246b; 2:258b (*Heikh*), 259b (*Heikh*); 3:6a, 53b, 66b.

62. **Alternatively, Bezalel and Oholiab…** Bezalel can also be understood as symbolizing *Ḥesed* on the right, while Oholiab symbolizes *Gevurah* on the left. These two opposite qualities were merged in making the Dwelling. See above, notes 6, 29–30, 47.

63. **a verse about Elisha…** The following verse describes Elisha's reaction to the children's taunting and the tragic consequence: *He turned behind him and saw them and cursed them in the name of YHVH. Then two bears came out of the woods and mangled forty-two of the children*. Rabbi Yose tries to justify the severe punishment of the children by explaining that they were totally lacking in Torah, neglected the commandments, and had little faith. His midrashic interpretation of נערים קטנים (*ne'arim qetannim*), *little boys*, derives from BT *Sotah* 46b (in the name of Rabbi El'azar). See above, note 58.

64. ***Came out of the city…*** This too implies that the children were lacking in virtue, having abandoned the realm of faith, identified with *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by *the city*.

The verse in Hosea reads: *The Holy One is in your midst, and I will not enter the city*. According to rabbinic tradition, God participates in Israel's exile, and this verse is understood to mean that until Israel returns to Jerusalem and God (*the Holy One*) is present once again with them there (*in your midst*), He *will not enter* the heavenly Jerusalem (*the city*). Here, the heavenly city of Jerusalem symbolizes *Shekhinah*, with whom the blessed Holy One will reunite fully only when Israel returns from exile.

See BT *Ta'anit* 5a, and Rashi, ad loc.; *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 1; *Midrash Tehillim* 122:4; *Zohar* 1:1b, 231a; 3:15b, 68b, 147b–148a, 262b.

65. ***He turned back and saw them…*** The verse reads: *He turned behind him* [or: *back*] *and saw them*. See above, note 63.

66. ***And saw them…*** Rabbi Yose provides further justification for the children's severe punishment. Not only were they lacking all virtue; they also were not destined to generate any virtuous descendants. Furthermore, their mothers had conceived them sinfully—on the night of Yom Kippur, when sexual intercourse is forbidden.

Both of these justifications appear in BT *Sotah* 46b—the first in the name of Rabbi El'azar, and the second in the name of Shemu'el. See above, note 63.

67. **וַיִּפֶן (*Va-yiphen*), *He turned…*** Elisha wanted to be sure that he would not be punished for cursing the children.

According to Numbers 12:1, *Miriam, and Aaron with her, spoke against Moses concerning the Cushite wife he had taken*. For gossiping about Moses, Miriam was punished with a scaly skin disease (ibid., 9). According to rabbinic tradition, Aaron was similarly punished but was quickly freed from the disease.

See *Sifrei*, Numbers 105; BT *Shabbat* 97a. For the full verse in Kings, see above, note 63.

68. ***He turned behind him…*** Rabbi Yose compares this with the similar wording in Genesis, regarding Lot's wife: *His wife looked behind him and she became a pillar of salt*. According to a midrashic tradition, in this verse *behind him* means "behind (or at the back of) *Shekhinah*." Rabbi Yose applies this interpretation to the verse in Kings: Elisha gazed behind *Shekhinah*, and through the Holy Spirit saw that all these children had been conceived sinfully by their mothers on the night of Yom Kippur, when sexual intercourse is forbidden.

On *behind him* as meaning behind (or at the back of) *Shekhinah*, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 25; *Midrash ha-Gadol*, Genesis 19:26; Naḥmanides on Genesis 19:17; *Zohar* 1:108b; above, note 58. On the children being conceived on the night of Yom Kippur, see above, note 66.

69. **שתים דובים (*Shettayim dubbim*), *two bears…*** The number *shettayim* (*two*) is feminine, yet the plural suffix of *dubbim* is normally masculine, so why doesn't the verse employ the masculine form of the number, שנים (*shenayim*)? Rabbi Yose explains that two female bears were accompanied by two male cubs. Actually, the (grammatically and morphologically) masculine noun דוב (*dov*), "bear," is epicene (indicating either sex), so the plural דובים (*dubbim*), can mean "(female or male) bears." See David Kimḥi on the verse.

70. ***forty-two of the children…*** See above, notes 57–58.

71. ***The gold of the elevation offering…*** Offered by the Israelites as a contribution for the Dwelling. Both gold and bronze are described as *of the elevation offering*, whereas silver is not. Rabbi Yose explains that both of these elements allude to the left side, which must be elevated in order to be pure. The lower form of gold symbolizes the demonic powers deriving from the left side. Silver, on the other hand, symbolizes *Ḥesed*, which retains its high status and requires no further elevation.

On bronze as being associated with the left side, see *Zohar* 2:135a, 139a, 148a, 229a, 233a, 260a (*Heikh*). The context in Exodus 38:24–25 reads: *All the gold that was used for the work, in all the work of the sanctuary—the gold of the elevation offering—was twenty-nine talents and seven hundred thirty shekels by the sanctuary shekel. And the silver reckoned from the community was a hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels by the sanctuary shekel*. Exodus 38:29 reads in full: *And the bronze of the elevation offering was seventy talents and two thousand four hundred shekels*.

72. **mystery of this counting…** The reckoning of the materials of the Dwelling begins with gold, in whose elevation the various divine "rungs and chariots participate." As the gold of the left side extends downward,

it gradually loses its brilliant purity until finally turning into dross, symbolizing demonic powers.

"Dross" renders the Zoharic neologism סוספיתא (*suspita*), apparently based on Aramaic כוספא (*kuspa*), "pomace, husk, residue." See *Zohar* 1:30a, 71b, 118b, 179b, 228a; 2:24b, 203a, 236b; *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 182; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 389, n. 54; idem, *Alchemy and Kabbalah*, 38–40; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 336–38.

73. ***And the silver…*** Here *elevation* is not mentioned because *silver* symbolizes *Ḥesed*, which retains its goodness as it descends, spreading to the worlds below and sustaining them. The full verse in Exodus reads: *And the silver reckoned from the community was a hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels by the sanctuary shekel*.

74. ***For a sun and shield is YHVH Elohim…*** Rabbi Yose explains that *sun* symbolizes *Tif'eret*, while *shield* symbolizes *Shekhinah*, both of whom share here the designation "the blessed Holy One." *Tif'eret*, the core of the sefirotic rungs, is often called *YHVH*, while *Shekhinah* is known by the name *Elohim*. She is also known as *I*, since here the Divine Presence manifests itself, declaring "I am." Thus God's declaration *I am your shield* links two designations of *Shekhinah*. Together, *YHVH* (equivalent to *sun*) and *Elohim* (equivalent to *shield*) form the complete divine name *YHVH Elohim*.

On אנכי (*anokhi*), *I*, as referring to *Shekhinah*, see *Zohar* 1:87b, 89a, 228a; 2:85a–b, 90b–91a, 236b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 380. On *YHVH Elohim* as the "complete name," see *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:3; cf. 12:15.

75. ***Grace and glory…*** *Tif'eret* issues a flow of emanation to *Shekhinah* so that they unite. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

76. ***He does not withhold goodness…*** *Goodness* refers to the primordial light of Creation, which God saw as *good*—too good for the wicked. See *Vayiqra Rabbah* 11:7 (in the name of Rabbi Yehudah son of Rabbi Simon): "With the

light created by the blessed Holy One on the first day, one could gaze and see from one end of the universe to the other. When the Holy One foresaw the corruption of the generation of Enosh and the generation of the Flood, He hid it away from them, as is written: *The light of the wicked is withheld* (Job 38:15). Where did He hide it? In the Garden of Eden: *Light is sown for the righteous, joy for the upright in heart* (Psalms 97:11)." See above, note 3.

77. **this does not need to rise...** The primordial light, which is *goodness*, is identified with *Ḥesed*, symbolized by *silver*. This element does not need to be elevated, but rather to spread to the worlds below—as opposed to *gold* (symbolizing *Gevurah* on the left), which requires elevation. Therefore in the verse in Exodus, *silver* is not linked with the term *elevation*. See above, notes 71–73.

78. **The right side endures...** *Ḥesed*, on the right, receives the flow of emanation from the highest *sefirot* and conveys this sustenance constantly to the world. Similarly, the priest (who symbolizes *Ḥesed*) receives blessing from above and stands ready to transmit it to the people.

The clause "The priest receives first" derives from rabbinic sources. According to M *Yoma* 1:2, the high priest "receives a [sacrificial] portion first," before the other priests. See BT *Nedarim* 62a (in the name of Rava), "Just as a priest receives first, so a disciple of the wise receives first." See *Zohar* 1:47b, 147b; *ZḤ* 43a.

79. **When the priest spreads his hands...** He raises his right hand higher than the left so as to stimulate the divine right hand (*Ḥesed*) to prevail over the divine left hand (*Din*). The priest's ten fingers symbolize ten sefirotic rungs—here, apparently, ten aspects of the lower *sefirot*. This sefirotic decade is blessed by *Binah*, "the source of all," known also as the World that is Coming. She illumines all the lower sefirotic "faces" and "lamps." Similarly, *Yesod* (known as Righteous One) is "the source of the well," namely of *Shekhinah*.

The expression “fills his hands” is a biblical idiom meaning “installs” into the priesthood. See Exodus 28:41. On *Shekhinah* settling on the priest’s fingers, see Rashi on *Ḥagigah* 16a, s.v. *u-mvarekhin*. On raising the right hand higher than the left, see Todros Abulafia, *Sha’ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 2:57a, 66a, 67a; 3:92b, 145a (*Piq*), 146a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254. On the symbolism of the ten fingers, see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:3; *Midrash Tadshe* 10 (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 3:174); *Bahir* 87 (124), 94 (138); Naḥmanides on Exodus 17:12; 30:19; Todros Abulafia, *Otsar ha-Kavod*, 29b–c; idem, *Sha’ar ha-Razim*, 57; *Zohar* 1:20b–21a; 2:57a, 67a, 75b–77a, 208a; 3:143a (*IR*), 145a (*Piq*), 186a–b, 195b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 254.

On *Yesod* as Righteous One, see above, p. 50, n. 130. On *Binah* as the World that is Coming, see above, pp. 34–35, n. 87.

80. **from the source and spring of the well…** Similarly, from *Yesod*, who is the source of *Shekhinah* (“the well”), all of *Shekhinah*’s lights are illumined. Thus *Yesod* corresponds to *Binah*. The priest (symbolizing *Ḥesed*) stimulates and conveys the flow from *Binah* (“the supernal source”), and *Shekhinah* (Assembly of Israel) is adorned. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 10, n. 25.

81. **Moses commanded and Bezalel performed…** Moses and Bezalel, respectively, played the roles of *Tif’eret* (the trunk of the divine body) and *Yesod* (the divine phallus), who is “consummation of the body,” symbolized by the covenant of circumcision. Their joint efforts ensured union with *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the Dwelling. All this was stimulated by *Ḥesed* (Love) on the right, which banishes the demonic evil eye and is symbolized by *silver*.

Whereas usually counting and blessing are incompatible, in the case of this reckoning, the blessings flowing from *Ḥesed* prevailed. See BT *Ta’anit* 8b: “Blessing is not found in anything weighed, measured, or counted, but

only in that which is hidden from the eye." See above, notes 23, 40. On *Yesod* as "consummation of the body," see above, note 61.

82. **blessing does not dwell in anything measured...** See BT *Ta'anit* 8b, quoted in the preceding note.

83. **But wherever the side of holiness settles...** If the counting is based on holiness, then blessing appears, for example, when a tithe is measured and thereby sanctified.

On the holiness of the tithe despite its being counted, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 64:6; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 10:6; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 25, 127b; *Tanḥuma, Re'eh* 14; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Re'eh* 12.

84. ***And the silver reckoned...*** Since this counting pertained to holiness, blessing appeared.

85. **The evil eye has no power over the seed of Joseph...** By withstanding the sexual advances of Potiphar's wife, Joseph proved his virtue and attained the rung of *Yesod* (the divine phallus, symbolized by the covenant of circumcision). *Yesod* conveys the flow of emanation characterized by *Ḥesed* on the right. Fittingly, the Dwelling (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) was fashioned by Bezalel, who also symbolizes *Yesod*.

The counting of the silver (which symbolizes *Ḥesed* on the right) alludes to all ten *sefirot* (or to ten aspects of the lower *sefirot*), each of which includes or reflects all ten, totaling one hundred.

According to a midrashic tradition, Joseph was immune from the evil eye. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 97, p. 1224; BT *Berakhot* 20a, 55b; *Zohar* 1:175a; 3130a (*IR*), 202b. On Bezalel as symbolizing *Yesod*, see above, notes 50, 61. The full verse in Exodus reads: *And the silver reckoned from the community was a hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels by the sanctuary shekel.*

86. **Surely, we will join with *Shekhinah*!** Who accompanies the venerable Rabbi El'azar, son of Rabbi Shim'on. Furthermore, Rabbi Abba looks forward to sharing words of Torah with Rabbi Abba, and *Shekhinah* appears among those engaged in Torah.

According to rabbinic tradition, "whoever welcomes [literally, receives the face of] the wise is considered as if he welcomes *Shekhinah*." See *Mekhilta, Amaleq (Yitro)* 1. Cf. JT *Eruvin* 5:1, 22b: "Rabbi Shemu'el said in the name of Rabbi Zeira, '…Whoever welcomes his teacher is considered as if he welcomes *Shekhinah*.' …Rabbi Yishma'el taught… 'One who welcomes his friend is considered as if he welcomes *Shekhinah*.'"

The *Zohar* sometimes transforms the rabbinic simile into an actual description of the righteous, who are called the face of *Shekhinah* "because *Shekhinah* is hidden within them: She is in concealment and they are revealed" (2:163b). See above, p. 128, n. 61.

See M *Avot* 3:2, in the name of Rabbi Ḥanina son of Teradyon: "If two are sitting with words of Torah between them, *Shekhinah* is between them." See ibid. 3:3, 6; BT *Berakhot* 6a; above, p. 61, n. 15.

87. **All creatures of the world…** Virtuous people and pure (i.e., kosher) animals are recognized and protected by the side of holiness, whereas wicked people and impure animals are recognized and supervised by the demonic Other Side.

Now that these Companions are together, engaging in Torah, "the help of heaven is here" and they are protected. See *Nitsotsei Orot* and the preceding note.

88. **wherever the side of holiness settles…** Usually, blessing does not appear in anything that is counted or measured, but this does not apply to what is holy. See BT *Ta'anit* 8b: "Blessing is not found in anything weighed, measured, or counted, but only in that which is hidden from the eye." See above, notes 23, 40, 81–83.

89. **Israel is holiness…** The verse in Jeremiah reads: *Holy* [literally *holiness*] *is Israel to YHVH, the first fruits of His harvest*. The verse in Leviticus reads: *You shall be holy to Me, for I YHVH am holy*. Cf. Leviticus 11:44–45; 19:2; 20:7.

The full verse in Samuel reads: *YHVH sent a plague against Israel from morning until the fixed time, and from Dan to Beersheba seventy thousand of the people died*. The phrase *until the fixed time* apparently refers to the end of the ordained three days of the plague. See Alter, *The David Story*, 356.

90. **Because he did not take a ransom…** In the ancient Near East it was commonly believed that counting humans was dangerous, apparently because determining an exact number of individuals would set them up as vulnerable targets for evil forces. The story of King David's ill-fated census, which triggers a plague, turns on this belief. According to Rabbi El'azar, David could have averted the danger of the census by collecting a "ransom" for each threatened life—as generations earlier God had instructed Moses to do during his census, collecting half a shekel from each male Israelite as a donation for the sanctuary.

"Holiness that is revealed" refers to Israel, in contrast to divine holiness, which is concealed. On the contrast between David's and Moses' censuses, see BT *Berakhot* 62b. The full verse in Exodus reads: *When you count the heads of the Israelites according to their numbers, every man shall give ransom for his life to YHVH when they are counted, that there shall be no plague among them when they are counted*. See Alter, *The Five Books of Moses*, on this verse.

91. **Israel is holiness…** They themselves should not be counted; instead, their ransom is counted. Israel's holiness symbolizes the primordial rung of *Ḥokhmah*, who is known as Holiness and cannot be counted. Beneath *Ḥokhmah* lies another holiness, namely *Shekhinah*, who is susceptible to calculation. Israel also symbolizes *Tif'eret Yisra'el* (Beauty of

Israel), the Tree of Life; outside the immediate realm of that tree lies *Shekhinah*, who can be counted and thus resembles a ransom. Israel's ransom protects them from the danger of counting.

On the relation between *Shekhinah* and "counting," see *Zohar* 1:46b (Vol. 1, p. 248, n. 1105); 3:220b; above, note 23.

92. ***like the sand of the sea…*** Just as the raging waves are finally subdued by the sand, so the raging nations are subdued by Israel's devotion to God.

See *Midrash Tehillim* 2:2. Cf. Jeremiah 5:22; BT *Bava Batra* 73a. "Rolling waves" renders גלגלין (*galgallin*), literally "wheels," but in medieval Spanish Hebrew poetry and in the *Zohar* גלגל (*galgal*), "wheel," is equivalent to גל (*gal*), "wave." See *Zohar* 1:245a; 2:27b, 48b–49a, 50b, 56a; 3:19a; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 296. The full verse in Hosea reads: *The number of the Children of Israel will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or counted; and instead of being told, "You are not My people," they will be called Children of the living God*.

93. **There is concealed, hidden measurement…** Based on the double description in Hosea—*which cannot be measured or counted*—Rabbi El'azar distinguishes between "measurement" and "counting." Both of these allude to hidden processes in the sefirotic realm, apparently to the mysterious "measurement" of the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod* and the mysterious "counting" of *Shekhinah*.

"Measurement" may refer specifically to קו המדה (*qav ha-middah*), "the Line of Measure," which delineates the stages of emanation, gauging the divine flow. Another aspect of divine calculation is known as שעור קומה (*shi'ur qomah*), "the measure of the [divine] stature." On the relation between *Shekhinah* and "counting," see above, note 91.

94. **Israel below…** The people of Israel must not be numbered directly, but only by counting their ransom, as

was done in the days of Moses and as David failed to do. (See above, notes 89–90).

According to Exodus 38:26, the total number of adult male Israelites came to 603,550, each of whom gave half a shekel as a ransom, totaling 301,775 shekels. A biblical talent is equivalent to 3000 shekels, so the total amount is listed as *a hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels*. The talents of silver (the larger units, amounting to a "high count") were used *for casting the sockets* of the planks of the Dwelling and of the posts of the curtain, both of which were part of the sanctuary proper; whereas the shekels of silver (the much smaller units) were used for making hooks for the posts of the pillars, which were part of the outer courtyard. Thus Rabbi El'azar indicates that the talents were "high entities," used within the holy precinct.

The context in Exodus (38:25–28) reads: *And the silver reckoned from the community was a hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels by the sanctuary shekel. A beqa to the head, half a shekel by the sanctuary shekel for each who underwent the reckoning from twenty years old and above, for six hundred thousand and three thousand five hundred and fifty. The hundred talents of silver were for casting the sockets of the sanctuary and the sockets of the curtain, a hundred sockets for a hundred talents, a talent for a socket. And from the one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels he made hooks for the posts and overlaid their tops and banded them*.

95. ***Unless YHVH builds the house…*** By divine power, the Temple built itself. See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:5 (on 1:1), in the name of Rabbi Berekhiah: "It is not written here *The House that they were building*, but rather *The House, in its being built* (1 Kings 6:7). It was built by itself!" See above, note 37.

On the question of whether David or Solomon uttered Psalm 127, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:10 (on 1:1); Rashi and Radak on Psalms 127:1; *Zohar* 2:164a; 3:221a. Cf. *Midrash Tehillim* 72:6; *Tosafot, Bava Batra* 15a, s.v. *va-al yedei Shelomoh*. The full verse in Kings reads: *The House, in its being built, was built of stone dressed at the quarry, so no hammer, ax, or any iron tool was heard in the House while it was being built*.

96. **corresponding to… *In the beginning God created*…** According to Rabbi El'azar, the opening verse of Genesis means *With beginning* [by means of the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*], *Elohim* [namely *Binah*] *created heaven and earth* [that is, emanated *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*]. Cf. *Zohar* 1:15a–b. Understood in this way, the verse corresponds to a mystical reading of the verse in Psalms: *Unless YHVH* [namely *Binah*, also known as the blessed Holy One] *builds the house* [namely *Shekhinah*, also known as "this world"]….

97. ***Its builders labor in vain…*** The lower sefirotic streams from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod* issue from *Binah* and flow into the *house* of *Shekhinah*, but it is actually *Binah* Herself (*YHVH*, "mystery of the upper world") who fashions the house.

98. ***Unless YHVH watches over the city…*** *Binah* watches over *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by *the city*, protecting Her from numerous demonic forces.

According to its simple sense in the verse in Deuteronomy, *upon her* means "upon the land of Israel," which here symbolizes *Shekhinah*. See *Zohar* 1:107a, 199a, 250b; 2:157b; *ZḤ* 87c (*MhN*, *Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 105.

99. ***Behold, the bed of Solomon!…*** *Shekhinah* is also symbolized by this *bed*, and She is surrounded by sixty divine powers who protect Her from the forces of Hell. Yet, Her main protection is provided by *Binah*.

On *Shekhinah* as "bed" or *bed of Solomon*, see *Zohar* 1:37a, 225b, 226b, 248b, 250b; 2:5a (*MhN*), 30b, 48b, 51a,

133a; 3:60a, 114a, 118b, 119b, 210b, 269b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 370. Cf. BT *Shabbat* 55b, where it is said that Jacob kept a bed in his tent for *Shekhinah*. See Rashi on Genesis 49:4. According to the eleventh-century Catholic reformer Peter Damian, Mary is the golden couch upon which God, tired out by the actions of humanity and the angels, lies down to rest. See Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess*, 280.

On *terror in the night* as the terror of Hell, see BT *Yevamot* 109b; *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 6; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11:3; *Zohar* 2:163b. The context in Song of Songs (3:7–8) reads: *Behold, the bed of Solomon! Sixty warriors surrounding her, of the warriors of Israel—all of them skilled with a sword, expert in war, each with his sword on his thigh because of terror in the night*.

100. **[…] although all exist…** The beginning of this passage, missing here, appears in the fuller version found in *Zohar* 1:65a (Vol. 1, p. 379) and 2:268b–269a.

All the radiancies of Thought (*Ḥokhmah*) exist within it. Then this radiance, yearning to return to its source in *Keter*, "strikes the radiance of the curtain," namely the curtain that is spread between *Keter* and *Ḥokhmah*. Both of these shine forth, "forming nine palaces of palaces," namely the hidden essences of the nine *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* downward. These are not yet to be identified as "lights," a term designating the *sefirot*, nor as "spirits" or "souls."

Paradoxically, immediately after denying the name "lights" to the palaces, Rabbi El'azar applies it to them. All nine palaces pursue their origin, namely Will and Thought, but these two cannot be apprehended. The phrase "the latter numerically one of them" refers to the fact that *Ḥokhmah*, Divine Thought, is first of the nine lower *sefirot*, whose essences ("palaces of palaces") are contained within *Ḥokhmah* itself.

"All those lights," yearning to return to their source, share in the designation *Ein Sof*. Up to this point in the

process of emanation, the light cannot be clearly perceived. No will or thought can venture there. Alternatively, these lights are not to be identified with either *Keter* (known as Will) or *Ḥokhmah* (known as Thought).

On the curtain spread between *Keter* and *Ḥokhmah*, see *Zohar* 2:165b, 259a (*Heikh*); 3:128a (*IR*). On the lights sharing the designation *Ein Sof*, see *ZH* 1b (*SO*), 104c (*Tiq*); Liebes, *Peraqim*, 174–75. For various interpretations of this passage, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:324–25 (translating and interpreting *Zohar* 1:65a); *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

101. **When Thought illumines…** When *Ḥokhmah* emanates, it fashions the palace of *Binah*, into which it enters.

102. **Through the mystery of the offering…** The sacrificial offering unites the *sefirot*, which then together ascend to the Beyond. On the mystical significance of sacrifices, see above, p. 15, n. 41.

Ayin (Nothingness) is a name for the primal, unknowable *sefirah*, *Keter*, which is the source of Thought and of all existence, yet not to be identified with any particular "thing" and thus best called Nothingness (No-thingness). Instead of אין (*Ayin*), the manuscripts and printed editions read here אין סוף (*Ein Sof*), which I have emended, based on the reading in *Zohar* 1:65a.

103. **Once it shines…** As emanation proceeds, the primordial point of Thought (*Ḥokhmah*) expands into the palace of *Binah* (known as "the upper world").

Binah, the Divine Mother, is "the supernal utterance," who speaks into existence all the lower *sefirot*. She is also known as מי (*mi*), *Who*, which implies that a seeker may inquire about Her, unlike even higher realms, which are so inaccessible that they cannot even be questioned or explored. Still, one should not expect any clear or conclusive answers about the nature of *Binah*. Rather, the mystical name *Who* becomes a focus of meditation, as

question turns into quest. See Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, 1:91a: "Concerning everything that cannot be grasped, its question constitutes its answer." The question in Isaiah—*Who created these?*—is now construed as a declaration: *Binah* (the divine *Who*) emanated all of *these* lower *sefirot* and, through them, all being. See above, p. 123, n. 46.

The full verse in Isaiah, referring originally to the stars and constellations, reads: *Lift your eyes on high and see: Who created these? The one who brings forth their array by number and calls them each by name: because of His great might and vast power, not one is missing*.

104. **it expands and becomes ים (*yam*), Sea...** Emanation continues and finally produces the ים (*yam*), "Sea" of *Shekhinah*—an anagram of מי (*mi*), *Who*. *Shekhinah* is the final sefirotic rung, who generates the lower worlds, which mirror the sefirotic realm. On *Shekhinah* as *yam* and "end of all rungs," see *Zohar* 2:51a, 56a.

105. **Thus, protection of all...** Returning to the verse from Psalms (see above at notes 95–99), Rabbi El'azar explains that the protection of *Shekhinah* (*the city*) depends on *Binah*, "this expansion of Thought." *Unless YHVH* (namely *Binah*) *watches over the city, the* [lower] *watchman looks out in vain*. Ultimately, *Shekhinah* needs the protection of *Binah* (known as "the upper world"), not of the *watchman of Israel*, which refers to *Tif'eret, Yesod*, or Metatron. Cf. *Zohar* 2:164a.

The full verse in Psalm 121 reads: *Look, He does not slumber nor does He sleep, watchman* [or: *guardian*] *of Israel*.

106. **violet of the Dwelling...** Yarns dyed in various colors (violet, purple, and crimson) were woven into components of the Dwelling and the priestly garments. Violet symbolizes *Shekhinah*, while purple symbolizes Her partner, *Tif'eret*. Here, Rabbi El'azar is apparently associating תכלת (*tekhelet*), "violet," with the root כלה (*klh*), "to

destroy." *Shekhinah* is *a consuming fire*, fiercer than other fire.

In the manuscripts and the Cremona edition, this passage continues with a description of Israel's union with *Shekhinah* and the sefirotic unification, virtually identical with the passage in *Zohar* 1:50b–51a (Vol. 1, pp. 282–84). In the Mantua edition the passage breaks off here.

The color תכלת (*tekhelet*) refers to a violet or bluish purple dye extracted from the gland of the *Murex trunculus* snail. On *Shekhinah* and *tekhelet*, see *Zohar* 1:51a–b; 2:27b, 135a, 138b–139a, 149b, 152a–b; 3:175a (*Piq*). See *Sifrei*, Numbers 115, in the name of Rabbi Me'ir: "Whoever fulfills the commandment of [wearing] the tzitzit [Numbers 15:38–40] is as though he greeted the face of *Shekhinah*, for the *tekhelet* [the colored thread on the tassel of the garment] resembles the sea, and the sea resembles the sky, and the sky resembles the Throne of Glory.'" See BT *Sotah* 17a.

On the verse in Deuteronomy, see BT *Ketubbot* 111b, *Sotah* 14a. On the expression "a fire consuming fire," see BT *Yoma* 21b (describing the fire of *Shekhinah*, which consumes the fiery angels); *Tanḥuma, Yitro* 16; *Tosafot, Ḥagigah* 23a, s.v. *she-ein bo*; *Zohar* 1:18b–19a, 50b, 69a; 2:19b (*MhN*), 89b; 3:25b, 27b, 138a (*IR*), 154b, 294a (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 63–65.

107. **Moses forgot about those shekels…** When he made an account of all the precious raw materials used in making the Dwelling.

See *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 7; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pequdei* 4; *Shemot Rabbah* 51:6; *Midrash Aggadah*, Exodus 38:21, p. 190; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 38:28. The version here matches the one quoted by Baḥya. For the biblical context, see above, note 94.

108. ***While the king was on his couch…*** According to *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah*, this verse alludes to the revelation at Mount Sinai.

The description of Torah as being "written in white fire upon black fire" reverses the rabbinic image, according to which it was inscribed (or engraved) in black fire upon white fire. See JT *Sheqalim* 6:2, 49d; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 5:11; *Devarim Rabbah* 3:12; *Devarim Rabbah* (ed. Lieberman), p. 89; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 1; *Midrash Tehillim* 90:12; *Zohar* 2:84a, 114a; 3:132a (*IR*), 154b. *Or Yaqar* offers a sefirotic justification for the reversal.

109. **The first letter of Torah...** That is, the first letter spoken by God at Mount Sinai: the אלף (*alef*) of אנכי (*anokhi*), *I* [*am YHVH your God*] (Exodus 20:2). Rabbi Ḥizkiyah is playing on the beginning of Exodus 38:28 (quoted in the preceding paragraph): *And from* האלף (*ha-elef*), *the one thousand, seven hundred seventy-five shekels he made* וים (*vavim*), *hooks, for the pillars* [or: *posts*] *and overlaid their tops and banded them*. The word *elef* suggests the letter *alef*, the first letter of revelation, while the *seven hundred seventy-five shekels* turn into 775 aspects of this *alef*. All these aspects are visible within the letter ו (*vav*), a spelling that also means "hook," as in the verse from Exodus 38. The spelling of ו (*vav*) itself includes two *vav*s, one "on this side" and one "on that side." Rabbi Ḥizkiyah may also be alluding to a fuller spelling of the letter: ואו (*vav*), in which the א (*alef*) is flanked by two *vav*s.

Furthermore, the letter *vav*, numerically equivalent to six, symbolizes *Tif'eret* (together with the five *sefirot* surrounding Him, from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*), and *Tif'eret* is identified with Torah, given at Sinai. The phrase "and so on all sides" may allude to the various *sefirot* surrounding *Tif'eret*.

110. **These *vav*s stood on pillars...** The court (or enclosure) of the entire compound of the Dwelling was bounded by linen hangings suspended from וים (*vavim*), *hooks*, attached to עמודים (*ammudim*), *pillars* (or *posts*). According to Rabbi Ḥizkiyah, the *vavim* (meaning "hooks" and also being the plural of the letter *vav*) symbolize *Tif'eret* and Torah (see the preceding note), while the pillars

symbolize *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, the sefirotic source of prophecy. Cf. *Zohar* 2:176a.

It became customary to begin each עמוד (*ammud*), "column," of the Torah scroll with the letter ו (*vav*), aside from a few exceptions. This practice is known by the mnemonic ווי העמודים (*vavei ha-ammudim*), *hooks of the pillars* (Exodus 27:10), or "*vav*s of the columns." See Kolatch, *Masters of the Word*, 391–92.

111. **Supreme *vav* is mystery of the audible voice...** *Tif'eret* (symbolized by *vav* and Torah) is the audible voice of revelation issuing from *Binah*, who is the inner *mighty voice*.

On the two divine voices, see *Zohar* 1:16b, 50b, 97b–98a, 141b; 2:81a–b; 3:6b–7a. The verse in Deuteronomy reads: *These words YHVH spoke to your whole assembly at the mountain from the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the dense fog—a mighty voice, adding no more*. The final expression, ולא יסף (*ve-lo yasaf*), means literally *and He did not add*. Here, Rabbi Ḥizkiyah follows a midrashic interpretation of the clause: "it did not cease." See *Targum Onqelos* on the verse: ולא פסיק (*ve-la pasiq*), "and it did not cease." See JT *Megillah* 1:4, 70d; BT *Sotah* 10b, *Sanhedrin* 17a; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 20:21; Rashi, *Leqaḥ Tov*, and Naḥmanides on the verse. Cf. *Shemot Rabbah* 28:6.

112. **a person must not greet his friend...** See BT *Berakhot* 14a, in the name of Rav: "Whoever greets [literally "gives שלום (*shalom*) to"] his fellow before praying [the *Amidah*] has, as it were, made him into a cult site, as is said: *Desist from a human, whose breath is in his nostrils, for* בַּמָּה (*va-meh*), *of what, account is he?* (Isaiah 2:22). Do not read בַּמָּה (*va-meh*), *of what*, but rather בָּמָה (*bamah*), *a cult site*." In other words, by greeting a human being before acknowledging God, one is, in effect, idolizing that person, who *is accounted as a cult site*. Rather, one should *desist from a human* until after praying.

Rabbi Ḥizkiyah quotes a different verse (from Proverbs) as a proof-text for this rabbinic teaching. The phrase *a mighty voice* alludes to *Binah*, "essence of the Holy Name," which implies that one is only forbidden from greeting his friend with a divine name, or with the word שלום (*shalom*), which is considered a divine name.

On the passage in *Berakhot*, see *Zohar* 1:228a, 248a; 2:182a; 3:190b; *ZḤ* 90d–91a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 35; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 42 (50–51); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 375–76; idem, *Orḥot Ḥayyim*, 16. On the prohibition against greeting one's fellow before prayer specifically with the word *shalom* or with another divine name, see Jonah ben Abraham Gerondi on Isaac Alfasi on BT *Berakhot* 8a, s.v. *ve-davqa*; and the works of Moses de León cited above. On *shalom* as a divine name, see BT *Shabbat* 10b. Cf. M *Berakhot* 9:5.

113. **this is *king*** The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *While the king was on his couch, my spikenard yielded its fragrance*. The subject *king* alludes to *Binah*, the *mighty voice*.

114. **On *his couch*—the revelation...** See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:12, where the phrase *on his couch* alludes to God being in heaven during the revelation at Sinai.

115. ***My spikenard...*** At Mount Sinai, Israel demonstrated true faith by declaring נעשה ונשמע (*na'aseh ve-nishma*), *we will do and we will heed* [or: *listen*]—thereby committing themselves to fulfill and enact God's word even before hearing the details. This pure act of devotion was fragrant to God.

See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:12; *Shir ha-Shirim Zuta* on 1:12; *Seder Eliyyahu Zuta* 4; *Zohar* 2:16b (*MhN*); 3:61b.

116. **Supreme King...** *Binah*.

117. **You must hide away...** Unless he hides himself, even a righteous person is vulnerable to the Destroyer. See

BT *Bava Qamma* 60a–b: “Rabbi Yosef taught: ‘What is the meaning of the verse *None of you shall go out from the entrance of his house until morning* (Exodus 12:22)? Once permission has been granted to the Destroyer, he does not distinguish between righteous and wicked.’… Our Rabbis taught: ‘A plague in town? Keep your feet indoors.’… Our Rabbis taught: ‘A plague in town? One should not walk in the middle of the road because the Angel of Death walks there, for as soon as permission has been granted him, he strides brazenly.’”

After the Flood, when Noah brought a sacrifice and *God smelled the pleasing aroma*, He resolved to never again destroy all life. See Genesis 8:20–22.

On being vulnerable to the Destroyer, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 11; *Devarim Rabbah* 4:4; *Zohar* 1:63a, 64b, 67b–69a, 101b–102a, 107b, 108b, 113a, 182b, 197b, 204b; 2:36a, 196a–197a; 3:38b, 54a–b; *ZḤ* 77a (*MhN*, *Rut*), 81c (*MhN*, *Rut*).

On the world becoming fully fragrant from the revelation at Sinai, see BT *Shabbat* 88b. The phrase “became fragrant” renders אתבסם (*itbassam*), “was sweetened” or “… firmly established.” The root בסם (*bsm*) conveys both senses. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 66:2; *Midrash Shemu’el* 26:4; *Zohar* 1:30b, 31a, 34a, 37a, 56a, 137a; 2:10a, 94a, 105a, 143a, 147b, 168a; 3:18a; Bronsnick, “Ha-Shoresh ‘Bsm’”; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 165, 388, n. 44; idem, *Kabbalah*, 228.

118. **the blessed Holy One was about to eliminate…** Israel’s willingness to accept the Torah stimulated God to eliminate evil entirely. However, the people soon sinned by worshiping the Golden Calf and were stripped of their holy ornaments.

On Israel's ornaments, see *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shelaḥ*, add. 1, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "He adorned them with weapons engraved with the Ineffable Name [*YHVH*], and as long as they possessed these, no evil could touch them, neither the Angel of Death nor anything else. As soon as they sinned [with the Golden Calf], Moses said to them: *Now take off your ornaments, and I will know what I should do with you* (Exodus 33:5). At that moment, *The people heard this evil word, and they mourned*, [*and no one put on his ornaments*] (ibid., 4). What is written? *The Children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments*." See above, p. 99, n. 118. On the elimination of evil at Sinai, cf. above, p. 29, n. 74; below, note 120.

119. **who placed the Destroyer there?...** Rabbi Yose wonders what role the Destroyer played, since the Flood was simply water. He explains that in order to execute judgment, the demonic Destroyer operates through such natural phenomena. Here, he operated through the overpowering waters and was thus called Flood.

On Noah having to hide himself, see above, note 117. These two paragraphs appear in nearly identical form in *Zohar* 1:63a.

120. **The world remained unsettled...** Even after the waters of the Flood receded and God resolved never again to destroy all life, the evil poison of the demonic serpent contaminated the world until Israel received the Torah, symbolized by the Tree of Life.

See BT *Shabbat* 145b–146a, in the name of Rav Yosef: "When the serpent copulated with Eve, he injected her with זוהמא (*zohama*), filth [or: slime, lust]. Israel, who stood at Mount Sinai—their *zohama* ceased. Star-worshipers, who did not stand at Mount Sinai—their *zohama* did not cease." See above, p. 99, n. 118.

In the manuscripts, this passage continues almost exactly as in *Zohar* 1:63b–64b (Vol. 1, pp. 369–75). In the

Cremona and Mantua editions the passage breaks off here with the words “did not escape the slime.”

121. ***he made*** **וים (*vavim*), *hooks*...** The term *vavim*, *hooks*, suggests the shape of the letter ו (*vav*). According to Exodus, the hooks for the pillars of the court (or enclosure) were made of silver, though there is no mention of them being overlaid with gold. *Vav* symbolizes *Tif’eret* (see above, note 109), known as Compassion, which combines *Ḥesed* on the right and *Gevurah* on the left, symbolized by silver and gold.

All of the precious raw material for the *vavim*, symbolizing sefirotic powers, was reckoned (see above, notes 93–94). There were a total of sixty hooks for the sixty pillars of the court; the phrase “with all the rest suspended from them” may refer to numerous other aspects of Compassion. See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

While the *vavim* symbolize *Tif’eret*, their *pillars* symbolize *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, who are identified with *the two pillars* in the Temple built by King Solomon. These two *sefirot* are situated beneath *Tif’eret*, the trunk of the sefirotic body.

On the hooks of the court, see above, note 110. On their being made of silver, see Exodus 27:10–11, 17; 38:10–12, 17, 19. On the question of their being overlaid with gold, see Meir Margoliouth, *Me’ir Netivim*, 75; *Nitsotsei Zohar*. The posts for the curtain (separating the Holy of Holies from the rest of the sanctuary) and the posts for the screen (separating the entrance of the sanctuary from the court) were overlaid with gold. See Exodus 26:32, 37; 36:36, 38; Ḥizzequni on Exodus 36:38. The full verse in Exodus 38 reads: *And from the one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels he made hooks for the posts* [or: *pillars*] *and overlaid their tops* [that is, the tops of the posts] *and banded them*. On the phrase “outside the body,” see *Zohar* 1:21b, 146a, 166a; 2:110b; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 11 (13–14).

122. **whether this is holy workmanship or secular…** Was the fashioning of the hooks holy or secular craftsmanship? Perhaps the latter, because in the verse from Exodus describing the raw silver the phrase *the one thousand* recalls the same phrase in Song of Songs, where according to rabbinic tradition the context is secular.

See BT *Shevu'ot* 35b: "Every *Solomon* mentioned in Song of Songs is holy, [for example, *The Song of Songs, which is* לשלמה (*li-Shlomoh*), *Solomon's* (Song of Songs 1:1) means] 'The song to the One who possesses שלום (*shalom*), peace'; except for this one: *My own vineyard is before me; the one thousand is yours, Solomon*—Solomon himself [will have *the one thousand*]—*and two hundred to those who guard its fruit* (Song of Songs 8:12), namely the sages." In other words, whereas throughout the rest of Song of Songs the name *Solomon* refers to God, in this verse (spoken by God) the name refers to the human king. God is saying: "From *my vineyard* [namely Israel] *Solomon* shall have *one thousand* men out of every twelve hundred [as soldiers or workers], while *two hundred* will *guard its fruit* [that is, study Torah]."

The context in Song of Songs (8:11–12) reads: *Solomon had a vineyard in Baal-hamon. He gave the vineyard to keepers and each would obtain for its fruit one thousand pieces of silver. My own vineyard is before me; the one thousand is yours, Solomon, and two hundred for those who guard its fruit*. According to the probable simple sense, Solomon entrusted his vineyard to keepers, who tended and guarded it. Each keeper would sell the fruit of the plot in his charge and obtain a thousand (or twelve hundred) pieces of silver for it, of which he would retain two hundred for his labor and give the rest to the king. In the second verse the speaker contrasts *my vineyard*—representing his beloved maiden—with the lucrative royal vineyard. Solomon must share his vineyard with others, whereas the young lover has his vineyard all to himself. Cf. the reference to

Solomon's one thousand wives and concubines in 1 Kings 11:3. See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 202; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 23 (27).

On King Solomon as "the one (or the king) who possesses peace," see *Sifra, Shemini, millu'im*, 15, 44c; *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 14; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:2, 3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:11 (on 1:1), 1:12 (on 1:2); *Zohar* 1:5b, 15b, 29a, 184a, 226b, 248b; 2:5a (*MhN*), 14a (*MhN*), 100b, 127b, 132a–b, 143b–144b, 164a; 3:10b, 20a, 60a, 73b; *ZḤ* 62b (*ShS*). For the full verse in Exodus, see the end of the preceding note.

123. **Not so!...** Obviously, in the verse from Exodus the number *one thousand* is holy, since *the one thousand* (*seven hundred seventy-five*) *shekels* were used to fashion the *vavim, hooks*, for the courtyard of the Dwelling. Furthermore, the total number here is larger than *the one thousand* in Song of Songs, which does indeed signify something profane, belonging to a mortal king. These two realms must be kept separate, as demonstrated by the *Havdalah* prayer, which marks the end of Sabbath and the beginning of the secular week.

124. **although holy is separate from secular...** Still, that which is secular, profane, or demonic obtains a share of holiness from the left side. As opposed to the *one thousand* mentioned in the verse from Exodus, the *one thousand* mentioned in Song of Songs represents a unit of time granted to the Other Side, namely the thousand years of exile that Israel suffers. Even if the exile lasts longer, "they are persisting in these thousand years," that is, Israel is continuing to suffer the original millennial term of exile.

On the portion granted to the Other Side, see above, pp. 16–17, n. 44; pp. 37–38, n. 97. On Israel's exile lasting a thousand years, see *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:40; 2:3; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* (Friedlander) 28, (Higger) 27; *Zohar* 1:116b; 2:17a (*MhN*); 3:270a; *ZḤ* 28c (*MhN*). Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 63:13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Toledot* 4. On the tradition "that

every mention of *Solomon* in Song of Songs is holy except for this one, which is secular," see above, note 122.

125. **every ו (*vav*) is in mystery of Compassion…** Symbolizing *Tif'eret*, who is known as Compassion (see above, notes 109, 121). Normally (and later in this paragraph), the name *YHVH* itself signifies Compassion, but for the moment Rabbi El'azar presents things differently, focusing on the letter *vav*. In the biblical story about Sodom, the wording ויהוה (*Va-YHVH*), *And YHVH, rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire* implies that Compassion (symbolized by the letter *vav*) mitigated Judgment (executed here by *YHVH*), so only Sodom was destroyed, not the whole world. The verse in Genesis 13, beginning *Va-YHVH, And YHVH, said to Abram*, does not relate to Sodom, but the immediately preceding verse does. (Rabbi El'azar may have in mind here Genesis 18:17, which also begins *Va-YHVH, And YHVH, said*, and does relate to Sodom.)

As opposed to the story of Sodom, in the account of the Flood the name *Elohim* dominates—a name that indicates Judgment. Actually, the name *YHVH* appears too (Genesis 6:5–8; 7:1, 5, 16), though not *And YHVH*.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 51:2 (on the verse in Genesis 19), in the name of Rabbi El'azar: "Wherever it is said *And YHVH*, this implies: He and His court." In Kabbalah this court symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who derives from *Din* (Judgment) and pronounces the divine decree, so the phrase *And YHVH* encompasses "He [the divine male, known as *YHVH*, symbolizing Compassion] and His court [*Shekhinah*, symbolizing Judgment]." See above, p. 212, n. 313. On *Elohim* signifying Judgment, and *YHVH* signifying Compassion, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 26; *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:15; 33:3; Naḥmanides on Deuteronomy 3:24.

The conclusion of the final sentence ("He intermingled…") means that at Sodom Compassion mitigated Judgment, whereas in the Flood "it (or "He," that is, Judgment) destroyed the whole world."

This passage (extending below to p. 307 at n. 128) appears in a slightly different form in *Zohar* 1:64b (Vol. 1, pp. 376–77).

126. **What about Noah…** If Judgment was unmitigated by Compassion, how were Noah and those with him saved? Rabbi El'azar explains that they were saved only because they were hidden in the ark, since the demonic force attacks whatever is visible. See above, note 117.

As explained in the preceding note, the wording *And YHVH* implies the mingling of Compassion with Judgment, in which case one can venture outside and be "in the open." However, if Judgment (signified by *Elohim*) manifests itself alone—as in the Flood—one must remain hidden.

127. ***YHVH sat at the Flood…*** In its simple sense, the full verse reads: *YHVH* יָשַׁב (*yashav*), *sat* [*enthroned*], *at the Flood; YHVH sits as king forever*. Rabbi El'azar chooses to read the opening clause hyperliterally: *YHVH sat at the Flood*, which He understands radically to mean that *YHVH* (symbolizing Compassion) *sat out* the Flood—uninvolved while unmitigated Judgment (symbolized by *Elohim*) wrought catastrophe.

The verse in Leviticus, referring to one who is ritually impure due to a skin disease, demonstrates that the verb "sit" can mean "to sit alone." The line "If the verse were not written…" is a rabbinic saying highlighting a radical formulation either in the biblical text or its midrashic interpretation. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:5.

128. **The blessed Holy One—concealed and revealed…** God is revealed through *Shekhinah*, the divine court, yet remains concealed above. The phrase "the place from which all blessings flow" refers either to *Yesod* or *Binah*. See *Zohar* 1:130b; 2:169a–b, 238b; 3:34a, 36a, 118a, 190b.

On the connection between blessings and concealment, see BT *Ta'anit* 8b: "Blessing is not found in anything weighed, measured, or counted, but only in that which is hidden from the eye." See above, note 23.

129. ***While the king was on his couch…*** The *Zohar* now resumes the discussion of this verse, perhaps by Rabbi Ḥizkiyah. See above at notes 108–118.

The king is actually the Divine Mother, *Binah*, who joins with Her partner *Ḥokhmah* (symbolized by Eden) by means of a subtle hidden passage. Thereby *Binah* is filled, and then emanates the sefirotic streams from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. Cf. *Zohar* 1:30a.

The hidden path between *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah* is sometimes linked with the description in Job 28:7: *A path unknown to a bird of prey nor spotted by a falcon's eye*. See *Zohar* 1:3b, 13b, 29b; 2:122b–123a; 3:61b, 193b. The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *While the king was on his couch, my spikenard yielded its fragrance*.

130. ***My spikenard yielded its fragrance…*** Alluding to *Shekhinah*, last of the ten *sefirot* and known as "the last sea." She is also known as Assembly of Israel, and the people of Israel's virtuous deeds render Her fragrant, stimulating Her union with *Tif'eret*, who illumines Her, enabling Her to conduct the lower worlds.

The phrase "the lower world, corresponding above" indicates that this world reflects the sefirotic world. On the kabbalistic principle of "as above, so below," see *Zohar* 1:38a, 57b–58a, 129a, 145b, 156b, 158b, 205b; 2:15b (*MhN*), 20a (*MhN*), 48b, 82b, 144a–b, 186b, 195b, 231b, 251a (*Heikh*); 3:40b, 45b, 65b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:273. On the similar Hermetic formulation, see *Secretum secretorum*, ed. Robert Steele, *Opera hactenus*, fasc. 5, 262. On the verse in Song of Songs, see above, note 115.

131. **When this spikenard emits fragrance…** When *Shekhinah* emits Her fragrance, love is aroused between Her and *Tif'eret*, and the angelic chariots celebrate the divine union.

The superscription to Psalm 46 reads: *Upon* עלמות שיר (*alamot shir*), *alamot, a song*. In this verse *alamot* is a technical

term that may refer to an instrument such as a flute or express a vocal quality, perhaps “youthful” (soprano), based on עלמה (*almah*), “maiden, damsel.” Here the speaker understands *alamot shir* as *maidens of song*, associating *alamot* with the verse in Song of Songs, where the word clearly means *maidens*. These angelic maidens cannot be numbered, just like the angelic troops.

On the technical term *alamot*, see Psalms 9:1; 48:15; 1 Chronicles 15:20. On its connection with *maidens*, see *Zohar* 1:158b–159a; 3:58b. The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *Sixty queens are they, and eighty concubines, and maidens without number*.

132. **ווים (*Vavim*), *hooks…*** These symbolize various aspects of *Tif’eret*, the Divine Male, who is identified with heaven and the letter ו (*vav*). (See above, note 109.) The “anointing oil” symbolizes the flow of emanation. “All those below” refers to angelic powers pertaining to *Shekhinah*, the Divine Female, who is linked with the left side. These *maidens of song* sing constantly. (Similarly, the Levites, who are linked with the left side, are assigned to sing in the Temple.)

The letter ה (*he*) can symbolize either *Binah*, the Divine Mother, or *Shekhinah*, Her daughter. Here, it probably symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who generates the angelic *maidens of song* through the power of *Tif’eret* (symbolized by *vav*).

The full verse in Exodus reads: *And from the one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels he made hooks for the pillars and overlaid their tops and banded them*.

133. **all those *vavim, hooks…*** These symbolize aspects of *Tif’eret*, which settle upon the female powers of *Shekhinah*. The *vavim* were made from (“emerge from”) *the one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels*. Each unit of this total number corresponds to a sefirotic entity or entities. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

The word *vav*, "hook," alludes to *Tif'eret*, who is symbolized by the letter ו (*vav*), and it suggests the shape of this letter. See above, notes 109, 121. For the full verse in Exodus, see the preceding note.

134. ***And the bronze of the elevation offering…*** The bronze symbolizes *Tif'eret*, which has its counterpart below in the demonic realm. The statue built by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon corresponded to this lower realm.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *And the bronze of the elevation offering was seventy talents and two thousand four hundred shekels*.

135. **He did not make it so…** Nebuchadnezzar built the statue entirely of gold (see Daniel 3:1), whereas beforehand in his dream he saw a statue consisting of various materials: *The head of that statue was of fine gold; its breast and arms were of silver; its belly and thighs, of bronze; its legs were of iron, and its feet part iron and part clay* (ibid. 2:32–33).

136. **Why not iron and clay?…** Since these elements also appeared in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue (see the preceding note), why were they not included among the raw materials of the Dwelling? Rabbi Yose explains that whereas gold, silver, and bronze partake of holiness (alluding respectively to *Gevurah*, *Ḥesed*, and *Tif'eret*), iron and clay do not.

The three precious metals gold, silver, and bronze were used for various components of the Dwelling; in other items four elements were featured: violet, purple, and crimson dyes, and linen. Similarly, there were four rows of precious stones on the priestly breastpiece.

137. **Some of them three…** Certain components of the Dwelling consisted of three elements, etc. The phrase "some of them two" may refer to the view that the hooks on the pillars of the court were made of silver and their tops

were overlaid with gold. See above, note 121. The final clause serves to introduce the following passage.

138. **Three arrays…** There are three divisions of angels on each of the four sides of the heavenly Throne. Each of these angelic divisions comprises three subdivisions. This passage (extending below to p. 312 at n. 150) appears with very slight differences in *Zohar* 1:159a–b.

139. **First array, to the east…** Corresponding to *Tif'eret*.

140. **These nine arrays…** All nine angelic divisions on the east side are conducted by letters, as explained below. The subject of "they all stir" is the angels.

141. **One letter knocks from below…** The letter ה (*he*) "knocks from below." The two letters י ה (*yod, he*) "soar above them" (that is, above the angels associated with them). These three letters form into the permutation י ה ו (*yod, he, vav*), comprising the three components of the name יהוה (*YHVH*), which is linked with *Tif'eret*, known as "the resplendent speculum."

On the name יהו (*YHV*), see *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:13; Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 31–33. On the phrase דנהרא אספקלריא (*ispaqlarya de-nahara*), "the resplendent speculum" (literally "a speculum that shines"), see above, p. 100, n. 119.

142. **Those two supernal letters…** The letter י (*yod*) symbolizes *Ḥokhmah* and the right side of the *sefirot*, characterized by Compassion. The letter ו (*vav*) symbolizes *Tif'eret* and the middle sefirotic column, which includes Judgment on the left. (For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.)

These two letters symbolize two components of the World of the Male, which extends from *Ḥokhmah* through *Yesod*. The letter ה (*he*) symbolizes the feminine. Just as *Shekhinah* is embraced by the two sefirotic arms, *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, so the letter he joins with *yod* and *vav*.

At the beginning of Creation, these letters issued from *Binah* (“the upper world”), and by them everything was fashioned. According to *Sefer Yetsirah* 1:1–2, God created the world by means of “thirty-two wondrous paths of wisdom,” namely the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet and the ten *sefirot*.

On the last sentence, cf. similar wording concerning the Name of Forty-two Letters (in BT *Qiddushin* 71a) and the Name of Twelve Letters (*Bahir* 80 [111]). See BT *Berakhot* 17a; *Zohar* 1:45b (*Heikh*), 152b, 242b; 2:46a.

143. **All these letters are male and female…** Rabbi Yehudah had said that י (*yod*) and ו (*vav*) are masculine, while ה (*he*) is feminine. Rabbi Shim’on teaches that all the letters are either male or female. See *ZḤ* 74c (*ShS*) and the list of letters in the note appended to *ZḤ* 74d–75a (*ShS*).

The “upper waters and lower waters” symbolize male and female sefirotic potencies. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:13: “Rabbi Shim’on son of El’azar said, ‘Every single handbreadth [of water] descending from above is met by two handbreadths emitted by the earth. What is the reason? *Abyss calls to abyss*… (Psalms 42:8).’ Rabbi Levi said, ‘The upper waters are male; the lower, female. The former cry to the latter, “Receive us! You are creatures of the blessed Holy One and we are His messengers.” They immediately receive them, as is written: *Let the earth open* (Isaiah 45:8)—like a female opening to a male.’”

See *Tosefta Ta’anit* 1:4; JT *Berakhot* 9:2, 14a; 1 Enoch 54:8; *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 10 (*Battei Midrashot*, 1:25); *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 23; *Zohar* 1:17b, 29b, 32b, 46a, 60b, 62a, 159a, 235a, 244a–b, 245b; 3:223b.

According to the second-century Greek physician Galen, sperm is generated by both male and female. See Leviticus 12:2; Ibn Ezra, Naḥmanides, Baḥya ben Asher, and Sforno, ad loc.; BT *Berakhot* 60a; *Niddah* 31a.

144. **Three, three…** Rabbi Yehudah (apparently) continues, describing three divisions of angels on the right

and three divisions on the left (all to the east). These triadic arrays correspond to the sefirotic realm, which is also arranged in triads.

145. **Second array, to the south…** Corresponding to *Ḥesed*, which is symbolized by silver.

The various male and female letters unite, according to the pattern of the name יהוה (*YHVH*), in which the first and third letters are masculine; the second and fourth, feminine. Accompanying the letters are appointed divisions of angels.

146. **the array of supernal Patriarchs…** The triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, symbolized by the three patriarchs, corresponds to the triad of letters י ה ו (*yod, he, vav*). Here *yod* symbolizes the right; *he*, the left; and *vav*, the center. "Countless forces and princes, all below" are lower angelic powers.

147. **Third array, to the north…** Corresponding to *Gevurah*.

148. **twenty-seven, in mystery of letters…** The twenty-seven subdivisions of angels (nine on each of the three sides: east, south, and north) correspond to the total number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet: twenty-two letters plus five final letters. The angels on the west side (corresponding to *Shekhinah*) are not enumerated here.

149. **nine letters in mystery of female…** The numbers nine and eighteen correspond, respectively, to nine times the single female letter, ה (*he*), and nine times the two male letters, י (*yod*) and ו (*vav*). See the list of letters in the note appended to *ZḤ* 74d–75a (*ShS*).

150. **high letters… other letters…** The large letters derive from *Binah*, the higher sefirotic realm, while the small letters derive from *Shekhinah*, the lower realm. See *Zohar* 1:3b; 2:132a, 174a, 180b, 205b; 3:2a, 220a; *ZḤ* 65d (*ShS*), 66c (*ShS*), 74c–d (*ShS*).

151. **The universe diffracts…** This cryptic passage (extending below to p. 314, after n. 152) appears with very

slight variation in *Zohar* 1:51b–52a. I have chosen not to impose any sefirotic interpretation, but rather to let the reader encounter the imagery in its raw, pristine form. For various interpretations, see Or *Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

The number forty-five may allude to the *gimatriyya* of the divine name יהוה (*YHVH*) spelled out according to its letters: יוד (*yod*), הא (*he*), ואו (*vav*), הא (*he*), which is equal to the *gimatriyya* of אדם (*adam*). See *Zohar* 1:34b.

The seven abysses are mentioned in *Seder Rabbah di-Vreshit*, 9 (*Battei Midrashot* 1:24–25). On the connection between abyss, stones, and water, see BT *Ḥagigah* 12a: "ובהו תהו (*Tohu va-vohu*), *Chaos and void* (Genesis 1:2).... *Void*—the slimy stones sunk in the abyss, from which water issues, as is said: *He will stretch over it a line of chaos and plummet-stones of void* (Isaiah 34:11)."

The subject of "All seven seize..." is the seven lights. On each abyss calling to its partner, see BT *Ta'anit* 25b, in the name of Rabbi Eli'ezer: "When water libations are poured [on the Temple altar] on the Feast of Tabernacles, one abyss calls to its partner, 'Let your waters gush; I hear the voice of two friends [the two vessels used for libation],' as is said: *Abyss calls to abyss at the sound of Your channels*."

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:13: "Rabbi Shim'on son of El'azar said, 'Every single handbreadth [of water] descending from above is met by two handbreadths emitted by the earth. What is the reason? *Abyss calls to abyss*....' Rabbi Levi said, 'The upper waters are male; the lower, female. The former cry to the latter, "Receive us! You are creatures of the blessed Holy One and we are His messengers." They immediately receive them, as is written: *Let the earth open* (Isaiah 45:8)—like a female opening to a male.'" See above, note 143.

152. **Beneath these lie 380 sinews...** The version in *Zohar* 1:51b reads "365 sinews," corresponding to the number of sinews in the human body, according to rabbinic

tradition. See *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 1:27; cf. BT *Makkot* 23b. The human body is a microcosm.

Seventeen (the number of sinew webs) is numerically equivalent to the word גיד (*gid*), "sinew." The subject of "When they ascend…" is the waters.

"Multicolored" renders סגונא (*sasgona*), whose meaning is unclear. It appears in *Targum Onqelos* and *Targum Yerushalmi*, rendering חחשים (*teḥashim*), whose exact meaning is also uncertain but apparently refers to a yellow-orange tanned leather or to a specific animal (dolphin, dugong, narwhal, badger). This material was used for the covering of the Dwelling. See Exodus 25:5; 26:14; and BT *Shabbat* 28a, where Rav Yosef explains *sasgona* as שש בגווני הרבה (*sas bi-gvanin harbeh*), "rejoicing (or glistening) with many colors."

153. ***The bronze of the elevation offering…*** Bronze was used for making sockets for the posts of the outer court of the Dwelling and of the screen in front of the sanctuary. Here the bronze symbolizes lower angelic forces that "stand as gates" or gatekeepers around the holy Palace of *Shekhinah*.

On *mountains of bronze*, see *Zohar* 2:135a, 139a, 233a, 260a (*Heikh*). The full verse in Exodus 38 reads: *And the bronze of the elevation offering was seventy talents and two thousand four hundred shekels*.

154. **ministering vessels of the altar…** Angelic powers who prepare the souls to be offered on the altar of *Shekhinah*. These powers are accompanied by others, symbolized by the *pegs of the Dwelling*, which together with ropes held down the linen hangings that bounded the court of the Dwelling.

On souls of the righteous being offered as sacrifices (by the archangel Michael, the celestial high priest), see *Araqim*, in *Otsar Midrashim*, ed. Eisenstein, 1:70a (cf. *Otsar Midrashim*, 1:104a; *Beit ha-Midrash*, 5:63); *Tosafot* on *Menaḥot* 110a, s.v. *u-Mikha'el*; *Zohar* 1:80a (*ST*), 81a; (*ST*); 2:37b, 211b, 247a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*), 24b (*MhN*);

Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 137; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 114–16. Cf. *Zohar* 2:119b (*RM*), 213b; 3:29b (*RM*).

155. **Gold is linked to gold…** The gold used for the Dwelling symbolizes *Gevurah*, the silver symbolizes *Ḥesed*, and the bronze symbolizes *Tif'eret*. The angelic forces described above derive their power from sefirotic bronze.

156. ***Golden clasps…*** Fifty *golden clasps* fastened together the linen curtains that formed the lowest layer of the covering of the Dwelling, while fifty *bronze clasps* fastened the curtains of goat hair that formed the second layer.

On the comparison of the clasps in the Dwelling to the stars, see BT *Shabbat* 98b–99a: "The clasps in the loops looked like stars in the sky." See *Baraita di-Mlekhet ha-Mishkan* 2; JT *Megillah* 1:11, 72c; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; *Shemot Rabbah* 35:6; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:8; *Zohar* 2:172a, 232a.

157. **Out of supernal light issues a spark…** From *Tif'eret* issues a spark that illumines *Shekhinah*, who is known as "the speculum that does not shine." That multicolored spark is called "purple," and when it strikes the dark color of *Shekhinah*, another spark issues.

On *Shekhinah* as "the speculum that does not shine," see above, note 15. On the multicolored quality of purple, see *Zohar* 1:147b (*ST*); 2:135a; 3:141b (*IR*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:130b, 147b, 149b. On the archangel Michael as the celestial high priest, see above, note 154.

On Moses and the cloud, see BT *Yoma* 4a: "Moses ascended in the cloud, was covered by the cloud, and made holy within the cloud, to receive Torah for Israel in holiness." See BT *Shabbat* 88b, *Yoma* 4b; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20, 96b–98a; *Zohar* 1:66a; 2:51b, 58a, 99a, 197a; 3:2a–b, 59a, 78b.

158. **Similarly, the high priest…** He could not enter the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur unless he was clothed in holy garments, which derived from the angelic garments

worn by the celestial high priest Michael. *Violet* symbolizes *Shekhinah*, while *purple* (which comprises many colors) symbolizes *Tif'eret*, who blends the polar opposites *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah* (symbolized respectively by white and red). Similarly, "the complete name," *YHVH Elohim*, symbolizes the union of *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*. The components of *crimson*—red and violet—apparently symbolize *Gevurah* and *Shekhinah*.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *From the violet and purple and crimson they made* שרד בגדי (*bigdei serad*), *woven garments, to serve in the sanctuary, and they made Aaron's sacred garments, as YHVH had commanded Moses*. The exact meaning of the term *serad* is uncertain; it has been rendered as *woven, embroidered, finely worked, service*. Here, it is interpreted as related to שריד (*sarid*), "remaining, surviving, fleeing."

On תכלת (*tekhelet*), *violet*, and *Shekhinah*, see above, note 106. On purple, see the preceding note. On *YHVH Elohim* as the "complete name," see *Bereshit Rabbah* 13:3; above, note 74.

159. **in Israel all colors appear...** The three divisions of Israelites—priests, Levites, and Israel—correspond to the sefirotic triad of *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who are symbolized by the colors white, red, and green (or purple). Cf. *Zohar* 3:296b–297a.

160. **The soul does not ascend...** After death, the soul can ascend only if she is properly clothed in a spiritual garment. Similarly, she cannot enter this world unless she is clothed in a physical body. So too, angels can perform tasks in the world only if they assume earthly form—as when angels appeared to Abraham in human form (Genesis 18).

On various aspects of the soul's garment, see above, p. 197, n. 266. The verse in Psalms reads: רוחות משרתיו אש לוהט עושה מלאכיו (*oseh mal'akhav ruḥot, mesharetav esh lohet*), whose simple meaning is: *He makes winds His messengers, flaming fire His ministers*. Here, the *Zohar* adopts a midrashic reading that follows the precise order of the

words: *He makes His angels spirits* [or: *winds*], *His ministers flaming fire*.

See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 4: "When they are sent by His word they are made into winds, and when they minister before Him they are made into fire, as is said: *He makes His angels winds, His ministers flaming fire*."

See *Tanḥuma, Ḥayyei Sarah* 3; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Yesodei ha-Torah* 2:4; Jacob ben Sheshet, *Meshiv Devarim Nekhoḥim*, 77; *Zohar* 1:40b (*Heikh*), 58a, 81a (*ST*), 101a, 144a; 2:10a, 98b, 173a–b, 231a; 3:9b, 126b, 152a; *ZḤ* 10a (*MhN*), 81b (*MhN*, *Rut*).

161. **When Adam was in the Garden…** According to the verse in Genesis, after Adam and Eve sinned God fashioned garments for them: *YHVH Elohim made coats of skin for Adam and his wife, and He clothed them.* The simple sense of כתנות עור (*kotnot or*), *coats of skin,* is "coats of animal skin, hides," but a variant reading recorded in midrashic literature is כתנות אור (*kotnot or*), *coats of light,* suggesting Adam and Eve's original aura or garments of splendor. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 20:12: "In the Torah [scroll] of Rabbi Me'ir, it was found written: 'כתנות אור (*kotnot or*), *garments of light*.' These are the clothes of Adam…." As a result of eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, Adam and Eve lost their lustrous *coats of light,* fell into mortality, and from then on "needed another garment, and so, *YHVH Elohim made coats of* [normal human] *skin for Adam and his wife*." The priestly *residual garments* retained some of the splendor of the original *garments of light*.

On *kotnot or*, *coats of skin* (or *of light*), see *Bereshit Rabbah* 12:6; 20:12 (and Theodor's note); above, p. 189, n. 238.

162. **The good deeds that a person performs…** The garment that enables a soul to ascend and appear above is woven out of the good deeds performed by that person in this world. Parallels appear in Islamic and Iranian eschatology—and in Mahayana Buddhism, according to

which the Buddha enjoys *sambhogakaya* (“a body of bliss”), generated by merit accrued over aeons.

The soul attains total perfection by first descending to this world in a physical body and performing good deeds, and then ascending in the garment woven of those deeds and basking in the splendor of “the resplendent speculum,” namely *Tif’eret*.

On the soul’s garment of good deeds, see *Zohar* 1:224a–b; 2:247a (*Heikh*); above, p. 197, n. 266. On the necessity of this world for the soul’s perfection, see Saadiah Gaon, *Emunot ve-De’ot* 6:4; *Zohar* 1:235a, 245b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 299; idem, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 46–47 (translated in Matt, *Essential Kabbalah*, 148); idem, *Mishkan ha-Edut*, 8a–10a; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:752–54. On *Tif’eret* as “the resplendent speculum,” see above, p. 100, n. 119.

The full verse in Psalm 27 reads: *One thing I ask of YHVH, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of YHVH all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of YHVH* ולבקר (*ul-vaqqer*), *and to seek* [or: *search, inquire, reflect*], *in His temple*.

163. ***He made the ephod of gold…*** The full verse reads: *He made the ephod of gold, violet and purple and crimson, and twisted linen*. The ephod was apparently a multicolored apron worn by Aaron the high priest. Its two shoulder straps bore two precious stones, each engraved with the names of six of the twelve tribes. Fastened to the ephod was a breastpiece made of the same multicolored fabric, to which were affixed twelve other gemstones, each engraved with one of the names of the tribes.

164. **The ephod and the breastpiece…** See the preceding note. The ephod symbolizes *Shekhinah*, while the breastpiece symbolizes *Tif’eret*. Their being attached to each other symbolizes the union of the divine couple. The twelve stones affixed to the breastpiece and engraved with the names of the twelve tribes symbolize “twelve boundaries,”

potencies, or lines branching out from *Tif'eret*, who is apparently identified as "the place of existence." These twelve boundaries convey the flow of emanation and connect the lower *sefirot* to one another.

The name *Yah* alludes to *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*, parents of the lower *sefirot*, since י (*yod*) symbolizes *Ḥokhmah* and ה (*he*) symbolizes *Binah*; so the twelve boundaries are called *tribes of Yah*. The full name of *Tif'eret*, the core of the boundaries, is *Tif'eret Yisra'el*, so *Yah* is called *a testimony to Israel*. Cf. above, note 18.

"Boundaries" renders תחומין (*teḥumin*), "boundaries, limits, dominions." The phrase "twelve boundaries" recalls the twelve גבולי אלכסון (*gevulei alakhson*), "diagonal borders" (edges of a cube), mentioned in *Sefer Yetsirah* 5:1. See *Bahir* 64 (95); Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 511–12; *Zohar* 1:76b (*ST*), 199a; 2:2a, 58b, 62b, 64b, 66b; 3:78a, 118b, 134b (*IR*), 148b, 209a; *ZḤ* 2a (*SO*), 55a, 62a (*ShS*), 63d (*ShS*); Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:917.

165. ***Tribes* is written twice…** Rabbi Ḥiyya reads the verse a bit differently. The first reference to *tribes* alludes to twelve camps of angels "below," surrounding *Shekhinah*, while *the tribes of Yah* signify the "twelve boundaries" associated with *Tif'eret* "above." *A testimony to Israel* refers to "the supernal Holy Name," which may refer here to *YHVH*, associated with *Tif'eret*. This *sefirah* is "called *testimony*" because *Tif'eret* is symbolized by Torah, which is described as *testimony* in the verse from Psalms: *My testimony that I will teach them*. Alternatively, "the supernal Holy Name" refers to *Yah*.

In the last sentence "those twelve supernal holy tribes" may refer to the "twelve boundaries" or to both the twelve angelic camps and the "twelve boundaries." "They exist below" would thus refer either to the twelve angelic camps or to the twelve tribes of Israel on earth. See above, note 18; *Matoq mi-Devash*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:918.

166. **When Jacob was journeying to Haran…** The *stones* that Jacob took that evening symbolize not only the twelve tribes who will issue from him but also the twelve camps of angels. The following morning they are referred to as a single *stone* (Genesis 28:18, 22), implying that all the angelic camps joined together with *Shekhinah*, the "holy stone above them." She is referred to as *a house of Elohim*, either because *Elohim* is one of Her names or because She receives and "houses" *Gevurah*, who is also known as *Elohim*.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:11; BT *Ḥullin* 91b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 35; *Tanḥuma, Vayetse* 1; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayetse* 4; *Midrash Tehillim* 91:6; *Zohar* 1:146b, 147b, 149b (*ST*), 231b. Genesis 28:11 reads in full: *He encountered a certain place and stayed there for the night because the sun had set, and he took of the stones of the place and put them at his head and lay down in that place*.

167. **the high priest places them on his heart…** See above, note 163. The twelve stones affixed to the breastpiece symbolize the "twelve boundaries" associated with *Tif'eret*, who is symbolized by Torah. These "twelve supernal entities" issue from *Binah*, "a single subtle voice" conveying divine will and thought. Below, are "twelve others," namely the camps of angels, who issue from *Shekhinah*, "another voice," who enunciates the divine word.

The verse in Genesis reads: *From there*, רועה (*ro'eh*), *the Shepherd, Stone of Israel*. But Rabbi Ḥiyya interprets *ro'eh* as a verb meaning "feeds, grazes," and takes the verse to mean that *Shekhinah* (*Stone of Israel*) *feeds* from *Yesod*. See *Bahir* 133 (193); *Zohar* 1:146b, 231b, 246b.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *Aaron shall carry the names of the Children of Israel in the breastpiece of judgment upon his heart when he comes into the sanctuary as a remembrance before YHVH perpetually*.

168. ***they would roll the stone…*** The full verse in Genesis reads: *When all the flocks were gathered there, they would roll the stone off the mouth of the well and*

water the sheep, and they would put the stone back in its place on the mouth of the well. Here, Rabbi Ḥiyya interprets *the stone* as referring to *Shekhinah*, whom Israel "rolls" into exile through their sins. In the time of redemption, they will help restore *Shekhinah* to Her full glory. On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see above, pp. 234–35, n. 386.

The phrase in Isaiah, *tested stone* (or *stone of testing*), symbolizes *Shekhinah*, by whom Israel is tested. See *Zohar* 1:140b, 231a–b; 2:249b (*Heikh*); 3:168a. In the last sentence, the subject of "they are all called 'stones'" is apparently the camps of angels.

169. **How many types of stones...** *The foundation of the house* symbolizes the foundation of the sefirotic realm, which is composed of the "twelve boundaries," pictured as *great stones, costly stones*. Then, there are twelve camps of angels, who are "precious supernal stones," divided into four camps, each headed by one of the four archangels. Correspondingly, the twelve tribes of Israel journeyed through the desert under four standards. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:919; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

170. **When the high priest placed these twelve stones...** *Shekhinah* settled upon him so that he could successfully consult the Urim and Thummim (an oracular device). After he posed a question, certain letters of the names of the tribes, engraved in the twelve stones, would protrude and shine in combination, indicating the answer. Among all the names of the tribes, the two letters ט ח (*ḥet, tet*) do not appear, since they allude to חטא (*ḥet*), "sin," which was not to be found among the tribes.

See above, note 163. On the Urim and Thummim, see below, note 174. On the letters protruding and/or combining, see BT *Yoma* 73b; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Kelei ha-Miqdash* 10:11; Naḥmanides, Exodus 28:30; *Zohar* 2:234b; Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*, 108; 161, n. 162.

On the missing letters in the names of the tribes, see JT *Yoma* 7:5, 44c; BT *Yoma* 73b; *Zohar* 1:3a; 2:152a; 3:188b. While BT *Yoma* specifies the letters ט (*tet*) and צ (*tsade*), JT *Yoma* specifies ח (*ḥet*) and *tsade*, though a scribal gloss adds *tet*.

171. **If so, this is fine for ח (*ḥet*)...** It makes sense that the letter *ḥet* would be missing from the names of the tribes, since this is the initial letter of the word חטא (*ḥet*), "sin," and even its name, *ḥet*, is virtually identical with that word. But why should the letter ט (*tet*) be missing, since, after all, it stands for טב (*tav*), "good"? And the Talmud states (BT *Bava Qamma* 55a, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshu'a): "One who sees *tet* in a dream should regard it as a good omen. Why?... Because Scripture inaugurated it with goodness, for from בראשית (*Be-reshit*), *In the beginning*, up to *God saw the light*, no *tet* occurs." In other words, since the first ט (*tet*) in Scripture begins the word טוב (*tov*), *good*, it is a good omen to see *tet* in a dream. See *Zohar* 1:30b, 152a; *ZḤ* 63b (*ShS*).

172. **Because the two letters adjoin...** In the Hebrew alphabet, the letter ח (*ḥet*) is followed immediately by ט (*tet*), so the latter is tinged with the negative quality of the former. Furthermore, the letter *tet* (whose numerical value is nine) symbolizes the primordial light of *Ḥesed* hidden in *Yesod* (the ninth *sefirah*), which transmits radiance to all the tribes and should not be revealed in any specific one of them. As their source, it fittingly does not appear among them.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:920; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the hiddenness of the letter *tet*, see *Zohar* 1:3a, 21a, 30b; *ZḤ* 63b (*ShS*). On the hidden light, reserved for the righteous, see above, note 3. On the image of the portico, closed on three sides and open on only one, see BT *Bava Batra* 25a–b; *Zohar* 1:145a; *ZḤ* 63b (*ShS*).

173. **All these stones exist miraculously…** Shining and protruding in response to the questions posed by the high priest. See above, note 170. Only a virtuous high priest would be provided with a favorable combination of shining letters.

174. ***the Urim and the Thummim…*** These were an oracular device whose precise character is unknown. There is no biblical information on the appearance of the Urim and Thummim, the material from which they were made, or the technique of their use. Certain references suggest that the device generated a binary response, indicating which of two alternatives was right. See 1 Samuel 14:41–42; 23:9–12; 30:7–8 (the latter two passages mention the ephod). Cf. above, note 170.

See BT *Yoma* 73b: "Why were they called אורים ותומים (*urim ve-tummim*)? *Urim*—שמאירין (*she-me'irin*), for they illumine [or: elucidate], their words. *Tummim* [understood here as based on the root תמם (*tmm*), "to be complete"]—for they fulfill their words."

The full verse in Exodus reads: *You shall place in the breastpiece of judgment the Urim and Thummim, that they be over Aaron's heart when he comes before YHVH, and Aaron shall carry the judgment for the Children of Israel over his heart before YHVH perpetually.*

175. **The breastpiece and ephod…** These two symbolize respectively *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, as do the Urim and the Thummim, as well as the tefillin and the knot of the tefillin. On the breastpiece and the ephod, see above, notes 163–64.

176. ***You will see My back…*** See BT *Berakhot* 7a: "*I will take away My palm and you will see My back*. Rav Ḥana son of Bizna said in the name of Rabbi Shim'on the Ḥasid, 'This teaches us that the blessed Holy One showed Moses the knot of tefillin [at the back of God's head]." (On God's tefillin, see BT *Berakhot* 6a.)

The tefillin themselves symbolize *Tif'eret*, who is known by the Holy Name, *YHVH*, while the knot of tefillin symbolizes *Shekhinah*. *Tif'eret* is the speculum that shines, while *Shekhinah* is the speculum that does not shine. See above, p. 100, n. 119; above, note 15.

On Moses seeing the knot of God's tefillin, see *Zohar* 2:43b (*Piq*); 3:263a. The full verse in Exodus reads: *I will take away My palm and you will see My back, but My face will not be seen*.

177. **אורים (*Urim*), for they illumined…** See the passage from BT *Yoma*, quoted above, note 174. The Urim (and the breastpiece) symbolize *Tif'eret*, the divine *face* and voice, whereas the Thummim (and the ephod) symbolize *Shekhinah*, the divine *back* and speech (who enunciates the divine word). These two halves of the divine couple should never be separate, just as voice and speech are not separate. Similarly, regarding the breastpiece and ephod, Exodus 39:21 reads: *They fastened the breastpiece from its rings to the rings of the ephod with a violet strand to be upon the band of the ephod, that the breastpiece not slip from the ephod*.

On voice and speech, see *Zohar* 1:36a, 145a–b, 246b; 2:3a, 25b, 202a, 222a; Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 335, 368–69; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 96.

178. **If so—that they never separate…** One must not separate the intimate divine couple, who are symbolized by the breastpiece and the ephod. Why, then, when the fugitive priest Abiathar fled to David (who was himself fleeing from King Saul), does Scripture mention the ephod alone without the breastpiece?

The end of the verse in Samuel is often understood as *he came down with an ephod in his hand*. Technically, the ephod mentioned in Exodus was worn only by the high priest together with the breastpiece, whereas the ephod mentioned in Samuel was worn or used by lesser priests without any breastpiece.

On the verse in Proverbs, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 20:2, referring to the serpent's advice to Eve to eat from the Tree of Knowledge: "*A whisperer separates an intimate…. A whisperer*—[this is the serpent,] for he whispered rebelliously against his Creator, saying: *You surely will not die* (Genesis 3:4). *Separates an* אלוף (*aluf*), *intimate*—for he separated אלופו (*alufo*), the Chief, of the world [that is, he caused *Shekhinah* to depart the world] and was immediately cursed." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:7; *Zohar* 1:34a; 3:12a, 16b, 31a, 74a.

179. **Whatever is important is hidden…** Rabbi Shim'on explains that the breastpiece is not mentioned here because it is more important (since in the Torah it includes the twelve engraved stones and the Urim and the Thummim), and whatever is more important is kept hidden. Similarly, the priests of Nob are described as those *who wore the linen ephod*, whereas the breastpiece, being more significant, goes unmentioned. See the preceding note.

The full verse in Samuel reads: *The king said to Doeg, "You, then, turn round and stab the priests," and Doeg the Edomite turned round and it was he who stabbed the priests and he put to death on that day eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod*.

180. **the supernal Name is a mystery…** The mysterious name יהוה (*YHVH*) is not pronounced according to its letters, but rather according to the letters of the more revealed name אדני (*Adonai*), thereby maintaining the secrecy of the holier name. Similarly, the Torah is revealed in its simple meaning, while its deeper significance is secret. This principle applies universally.

On the Torah being both revealed and concealed, see *Zohar* 1:234b; 2:95a, 98b–99b; 3:71b–72a, 73a, 75a, 98b, 159a. Cf. above, p. 241, n. 409.

181. ***Tell us, on account of whom…*** When God commanded Jonah to prophesy against the city of Nineveh, he tried to flee by sailing on a ship in the Mediterranean;

but God sent a tempest that threatened to destroy the vessel. The sailors onboard questioned Jonah, suspecting that he was the cause of this calamity, and their apparently simple words alluded to deep mysteries, illustrating the principle mentioned above.

By uttering the word באשר (*ba-asher*), *on account* (*of whom has this calamity come upon us*), they were actually seeking to discover whether Jonah was descended from Joseph, since this same word appears at a crucial point in the Joseph saga. When Potiphar's wife tries to seduce Joseph, he refuses, saying to her: *Look, with me here, my master has given no thought to what is in his house, and all that belongs to him he has placed in my hands. There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you*, באשר (*ba-asher*), *inasmuch as, you are his wife. So how could I do this great evil, and sin against God?* (Genesis 39:8–9). By withstanding the sexual advances of Potiphar's wife, Joseph proved his virtue and attained the rung of *Yesod*, the divine phallus. Many years later, during the Exodus, Moses took Joseph's bones out of Egypt (see Exodus 13:19), and according to a midrashic tradition, for the sake of (or upon seeing the remains of) this righteous hero the waters of the Red Sea split. Here, based on that tradition, Rabbi Shim'on interprets the verse in Psalms (*The sea saw and fled, the Jordan turned back*) as: *The sea saw* Joseph—the one of whom is written *He fled* [from Potiphar's wife]—and so the sea *fled*, splitting its waters; meanwhile, far away, even *the Jordan turned back*. The sailors reasoned that if Jonah was descended from Joseph (before whom the waters fled), then through his prayers he should be able to calm these raging waters.

On the tradition of the Red Sea splitting for Joseph's sake, see *Mekhilta, Beshallaḥ* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:15; *Bereshit Rabbah* 87:8; *Tanḥuma, Vayeshev* 9, *Naso* 30; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 34; *Midrash Tehillim* 114:9; *Zohar* 2:49a; 3:214a.

The full verse in Jonah reads: *They said to him, "Tell us, on account of whom has this calamity come upon us? What is your work, and where do you come from? What is your country, and of what people are you?"* Genesis 39:12 reads in full: *She seized him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me!" And he left his garment in her hand and he fled and went outside*.

182. **לְמִי (*Le-mi*), *of whom*...** The verse reads: *Tell us, on account le-mi, of whom, has this calamity come upon us?* See the preceding note. Rabbi Shim'on links the word *le-mi, of whom*, to the same word in the story of Jacob sending messengers with gifts to his brother Esau. The context in Genesis (32:18–19) reads: *He instructed the first one, saying, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, saying, 'Le-mi, Whose, are you, and where are you going, and whose are these herds before you?' you shall say, 'Your servant Jacob's; they are a tribute sent to my lord Esau, and, look, he himself is behind us."'*

According to Rabbi Shim'on, the messengers were actually angels, who saved Jacob from any harm that Esau might have inflicted on him. By using the word *le-mi, of whom*, the sailors were asking Jonah whether he was descended from Jacob, who used this same word; and if he was, then he should pray to God to send an angel to save them from the storm.

183. **And if not...** That is, if you are not descended from either Joseph or Jacob.

Soon after the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, they were attacked by Amalek, and consequently this enemy was doomed. See Exodus 17:8–14; Deuteronomy 25:17–19. The seven idolatrous nations who inhabited Canaan were considered abhorrent and were thus also doomed to destruction. See Deuteronomy 7:1; 20:16–18.

184. **from the seed of Abraham...** Who is called *Abram the Hebrew* (Genesis 14:13). The sailors asked Jonah simple questions with hidden meaning (or both

simple questions and coded questions), whereas he responded clearly and explicitly.

185. **they all knew of the miracles…** That God had performed for Israel at the Red Sea.

186. **he told them that he was fleeing…** To avoid God's command to prophesy against Nineveh. The full verse reads: *The men were greatly terrified, and they asked him, "What have you done?" For the men knew that he was fleeing from before YHVH, because he told them*.

187. **Afterward they all converted…** As recounted in midrashic sources. See *Tanḥuma, Vayiqra* 8; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 10; *Midrash Yonah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:99).

On the fish swallowing Jonah and vomiting him onto dry land, see Jonah 2:1, 11. Jonah 2:9 reads: *Those devoted to* הבלי שוא (*havlei shav*), *vapors of falsehood* [or: *worthless vapors, worthless* (or *lying*) *vanities, vaporous lies*], *forsake* [literally *will forsake*] חסדם (*ḥasdam*), *their grace* [or: *loyalty, shame*]. Here, the verse refers to idolators devoted to their false and worthless gods who eventually *will forsake their shame* (or *loyalty*). The term חסד (*ḥesed*), "loving-kindness, grace, loyalty," can also mean "shame," as in Leviticus 20:17; Proverbs 14:34. See *Leqaḥ Tov*, Leviticus 20:17; Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and Radak on Jonah 2:9.

188. **righteous converts…** The term גר צדק (*ger tsedeq*), "convert of righteousness," refers to a convert who accepts all the laws of Judaism.

"The concealed Name" is *YHVH* (see above at note 180), associated with *Tif'eret*, who ascends the Throne of Glory, symbolizing *Shekhinah*.

189. ***They fastened the breastpiece…*** The *violet strand* symbolizes *Shekhinah*, with whom all the higher *sefirot* unite. See *Zohar* 2:235b. On תכלת (*tekhelet*), *violet*, and *Shekhinah*, see above, note 106. As explained earlier, the breastpiece and the ephod symbolize respectively *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. The full verse in Exodus reads: *They fastened the breastpiece from its rings to the rings of the ephod with a violet strand to be upon the band of the ephod, that the breastpiece not slip from the ephod, as YHVH had commanded Moses.*

190. ***A golden bell and a pomegranate…*** The context (Exodus 28:34–35) reads: *A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, on the hem of the robe all around. It shall be upon Aaron when he serves, so that its sound may be heard when he comes into the sanctuary before YHVH and when he goes out, that he shall not die*. "The sound [or: voice] that is heard" symbolizes *Tif'eret*, who conveys the flow of blessing.

191. **filled like a pomegranate…** Is filled with seeds. See BT *Berakhot* 57a: "*Like a slice of pomegranate is* רקתך (*raqatekh*), *your forehead* (Song of Songs 4:3).... Even ריקנין (*reiqanin*), the empty ones, among you [i.e., among Israel] are as full of *mitsvot* as a pomegranate [is full of seeds]." See *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 4:3. For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

192. ***He made the robe of the ephod…*** This robe was worn beneath the ephod. The breastpiece symbolizes *Tif'eret*, while the ephod as well as its robe symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is also associated with the color *violet* and the Throne. The *violet* of *Shekhinah* joins with the white radiance of *Tif'eret*. See *Zohar* 1:51a–b. On תכלת (*tekhelet*), *violet*, and *Shekhinah*, see above, note 106.

193. **garments below follow the pattern above…** The priestly garments are modeled on the garments of the archangel Michael, the celestial high priest. See above at notes 157–58 and the accompanying notes.

Rabbi Shim'on wonders why, if Michael (associated with *Ḥesed* on the right side) is the high priest, Gabriel (associated with *Gevurah* on the left) is described as *the man clothed in linen*? He explains that this shows how the left is

included in the right, how the harshness of *Gevurah* is softened by the love of *Ḥesed*. See above, note 38.

On Gabriel as *the man clothed in linen*, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 21:5; BT *Yoma* 77a, and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *levush ha-baddim*; *Tanḥuma, Tazri'a* 9; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tazri'a* 12; David Kimḥi on Ezekiel 10:7. Cf. Daniel 8:16; 9:21; *Zohar* 2:139a, 233a. On the figure *clothed in linen*, see also Ezekiel 9:2–3, 11; 10:2, 6–7; Daniel 10:5; 12:6. On the linen garments of the high priest, see Exodus 28:39; 39:27–29; Leviticus 16:4.

194. **Gabriel is appointed as messenger…** And, as indicated previously, when an angelic messenger appears in the world he must be clothed in earthly garments. Similarly, when a soul ascends to heaven after death she is clothed in a spiritual garment, and when initially entering to this world she is clothed in a physical body. See above, notes 160, 162.

195. **This robe of the ephod covered him…** Both behind and in front. The verse in Psalms alludes here to the original androgynous human, whose female and male components were respectively *behind and in front*.

See *Midrash Tehillim* 139:5: "*Behind and in front You formed me*. What is *behind and in front*? They were created [as a single creature] with two faces. So it was with Adam: behind him was the form of Eve—as is said: *YHVH Elohim built the side* [*He had taken from the human into a woman*] (Genesis 2:22)." See above, p. 203, n. 284.

See *Bereshit Rabbah* 8:1: "Rabbi Yirmeyah son of El'azar said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him androgynous, as is said: *Male and female He created them* (Genesis 5:2).' Rabbi Shemu'el son of Naḥmani said, 'When the blessed Holy One created Adam, He created him with two faces; and He sawed him and gave him two backs, one on this side and one on that.'"

On God adorning Eve, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 18:1: "*YHVH Elohim built the rib* [or: *side*] (Genesis 2:22)…. It was taught

in the name of Rabbi Shim’on son of Yoḥai: ‘He adorned her like a bride and brought her to him.’” See the parallels cited by Theodor.

The verse in Psalms reads: *Behind and in front* צרתני (*tsartani*)—apparently meaning *You besieged* [or: *encompassed*] *me*. However, rabbinic sources understand the root צור (*tsur*) as a by-form of יצר (*ytsr*), “to form.” See Vol. 4, p. 285, n. 306.

196. **the serpent copulated with Eve…** See BT *Shabbat* 145b–146a, in the name of Rav Yosef: “When the serpent copulated with Eve, he injected her with זוהמא (*zohama*), filth [or: slime, lust].” See *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 21 (according to David Luria’s emendation, based on *Yalqut Shim’oni*, Genesis 35): “The serpent-rider [Samael] copulated with her and she conceived Cain. Afterward her husband, Adam, copulated with her and she conceived Abel.”

Elsewhere, the *Zohar* indicates that Cain was formed from both the serpent’s slime and Adam’s seed. From the fallen angel Samael (identified with the serpent), Cain inherited traits of the upper world; from Adam, he inherited traits of the lower world.

See *Zohar* 1:54a; *ZḤ* 63c (*ShS*), 83b (*MhN*, *Rut*); David Luria, *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 21, n. 8. On the serpent’s role in engendering Cain, see also *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 4:1 (per British Library MS 27031, ed. Clark); *Zohar* 1:36b–37a, 52a, 54a–55a, 63b, 122b, 126a–b, 145b; 2:94a, 167b, 178a (*SdTs*), 193b, 236b; 3:14b, 76b, 97b; *ZḤ* 8c–9b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 139; Stroumsa, *Another Seed*, 38–53.

Cain’s demonic heredity influenced him to murder his brother, like a snake lurking in the field and striking suddenly.

197. **We have found in ancient books…** Rabbinic tradition offers various theories as to how Cain killed Abel. Here, Rabbi Shim’on may perhaps be referring to, and

altering, (a fragment of) *Targum Yerushalmi*, according to which: “[Cain] did not know how to strike him. He looked here and there until he saw two birds striking one another, and one rose against its fellow and struck it with its mouth, and [the other one] shed blood until it died. Cain learned from it and did so to Abel and saw that he died….”

See Ginsburger, ed., *Das Fragmententhargum*, 71–72; Scholem. For other methods possibly employed by Cain, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 22:8; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 4:8; BT *Sanhedrin* 37b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 21; *Tanḥuma, Bereshit* 9; *Aggadat Bereshit* 26; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Genesis 4:8; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:139–40, n. 20.

198. **He separated from his wife…** See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bereshit* 26, in the name of Rabbi Simon: “For 130 years Adam separated from his wife, Eve, for once Cain was killed, Adam said, ‘Why should I engender children if they become cursed?’ What did he do?… Female spirits approached him and inflamed themselves from him. As the blessed Holy One said to David, ‘… *When he* [*Solomon*] *does wrong, I will chastise him with the rod of men* ובנגעי בני אדם (*uv-nig’ei venei adam*), *and with the afflictions of* (*the sons of*) *humankind* [understood as *of the children of Adam*]’ (2 Samuel 7:14)…, namely the demons.”

Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 20:11, in the name of the same Rabbi Simon: “Throughout all 130 years that Adam separated himself from Eve, male spirits inflamed themselves from her and she gave birth, while female spirits inflamed themselves from Adam and gave birth, as is written: *When he does wrong, I will chastise him with the rod of men and with the afflictions of venei adam*—namely children of Adam.”

See BT *Eruvin* 18b; *Zohar* 1:19b, 34b, 47b–48a, 54a–55a, 169b; 2:178b–179a (SdTs); 3:48b, 76b; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:529–30; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, 51. The figure of 130 years derives from Genesis 5:3: *Adam lived a hundred and thirty years and he*

engendered in his likeness, according to his image, and called his name Seth.

199. **Afterward, he became jealous…** Because "male spirits inflamed themselves from [Eve] and she gave birth" (see the passage from *Bereshit Rabbah* in the preceding note).

Adam's third son, Seth, was finally *in his likeness, according to his image*, unlike "those first sons before," which could, of course, refer to Cain and Abel. Not only Cain was tainted (see above, note 196), but Abel too, since Eve was still infected by the serpent's slime. (See *Zohar* 1:55a; 2:167b–168a.) Here, though, Rabbi Shim'on alludes to a tradition about Lilith, who preceded Eve as Adam's first wife and provided Adam with "another conjoining" and earlier offspring. Finally, when Eve appeared, Adam celebrated her arrival by declaring *This one shall be called Woman*—unlike Lilith.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On Seth alone being in Adam's *likeness, according to his image*, see BT *Eruvin* 18b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 22; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 1:7; *Zohar* 1:55a; 2:167b–168a; *ZḤ* 8c–9b.

On Lilith, see *Alfa Beita de-Ven Sira*, ed. Yassif, 231–34; Margaliot, *Mal'akhei Elyon*, 235–41; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 356–61. On Lilith being impregnated by Adam, see *Zohar* 1:34b. On God adorning Eve, see above, note 195. On Adam and Eve uniting face-to-face, see above at note 195.

On the metaphor of being clothed in jealousy, see Isaiah 59:17. For the full verse in Genesis 5, see the end of the preceding note. Adam's exclamation in Genesis 2 reads in full: *This one at last, bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh! This one shall be called Woman, for from man was this one taken*. See the unpublished *Zohar* passage quoted by Recanati, *Peirush al ha-Torah*, 12a.

200. **Adam and Eve were created as one…** As a single androgynous being. See above, note 195. The full

verse in Genesis reads: *Male and female He created them, and He blessed them and named them* אדם (*adam*), *humankind, on the day they were created*.

201. **The ephod and the breastpiece…** The apron-like ephod, worn over the robe, apparently covered the entire lower half of the priest's body in the back, while only partially covering the front lower half. The breastpiece was worn in front. Wearing both the ephod and the breastpiece, the high priest "resembled the supernal image" of *Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret*, who are symbolized respectively by these two splendid components. See above, notes 163–64.

When consulting the Urim and the Thummim, the high priest would pose a question and certain letters of the names of the tribes, engraved in the twelve stones of the breastpiece, would protrude and shine in combination, indicating the answer. See above, notes 170, 173.

202. **joined as one…** Symbolizing the union of the divine couple. Golden rings were attached to each of the four corners of the breastpiece, which was then joined to the ephod by golden cords or chains (linking the two top rings of the breastpiece to two settings on the high priest's shoulders) and by a violet strand (linking the two lower rings of the breastpiece to two other rings on the shoulder straps where they were connected to the belt of the ephod).

Here "four rings" may refer to the two bottom rings of the breastpiece and the two rings on the shoulder straps of the ephod. These four rings correspond to angelic chariots who escort *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the ephod) to unite with *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the breastpiece). Just as the ephod and breastpiece were joined—*so that the breastpiece not slip from the ephod* (Exodus 39:21)—so the angelic *ofanim* (wheels) and *ḥayyot* (living beings) were linked, as described in Ezekiel 1:19: *When the ḥayyot moved, the ofanim moved beside them; and when the ḥayyot rose off the ground, the ofanim rose too*.

203. ***In the beginning…*** The Dwelling corresponds to the entire world, and both correspond to the sefirotic realm. The purpose of the Dwelling was to provide a home for *Shekhinah* in the world, in addition to Her divine realm. Similarly, the Garden of Eden straddles both worlds, being suffused with spiritual energy while also containing archetypes of all earthly existence.

On the correspondence between the Dwelling and the cosmos, see above, note 6. On the kabbalistic principle of "as above, so below," see above, note 130. On the Garden of Eden containing "forms and images of the world," see above, p. 197, n. 266. On the earthly and heavenly Gardens of Eden, see Vol. 5, p. 373, n. 519.

204. ***Lift your eyes on high…*** The full verse in Isaiah refers to seeing the stars and constellations: *Lift your eyes on high and see: Who created these? The one who brings forth their array by number and calls them each by name: because of His great might and vast power, not one is missing*. Here, "what it is not permitted to know and see" apparently refers to concealed divine realities or to how God *brings forth their array by number*. Rather, one should gaze at the heavens and see (or imagine) the countless forces there, and then ask *Who created these?* See *Or Yaqar*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

205. **the mystery: *Who created these…*** *Binah*, the concealed Divine Mother, is known as מי (*mi*), *Who*, which implies that a seeker may inquire about Her, unlike even higher realms, which are so inaccessible that they cannot even be questioned or explored. Still, one should not expect any clear or conclusive answers about the nature of *Binah*. Rather, the mystical name *Who* becomes a focus of meditation, as question turns into quest. See Shim'on Lavi, *Ketem Paz*, 1:91a: "Concerning everything that cannot be grasped, its question constitutes its answer." The question in Isaiah—*Who created these*?—is now construed as a declaration: *Binah* (the divine *Who*) emanated all of *these*

lower *sefirot* and, through them, all being. See above, note 103; p. 123, n. 46.

206. ***The one who brings forth…*** *Binah* is symbolized by the shofar, which emits the sound of *Tif'eret*, who embraces "all the supernal forces" from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, by whom all lower existence is gauged. Eventually "rungs extend downward," and numerous angelic forces diverge.

The verse in Isaiah continues: *and calls them each by name*. See above, note 204. On divine counting and measuring, see above, notes 91, 93.

207. ***Because of His great might…*** The word רוב (*rov*), *great*, alludes to *Ḥesed*, known as *Gedullah* (Greatness), on the right side. The word כח (*koaḥ*), *power*, alludes to *Gevurah* (Power), on the left side. The conclusion of the verse—*not one is missing*—indicates that all lower aspects derive from (and convey) one of these two polar opposites or their combination in *Tif'eret*. For the full verse in Isaiah, see above, note 204.

208. **when the Dwelling was erected…** Whoever gazed upon the Dwelling could see everything, since it corresponded to the entire cosmos. See above, notes 6, 203.

On the comparison of the clasps in the Dwelling to the stars, see BT *Shabbat* 98b–99a: "The clasps in the loops looked like stars in the sky." See above, note 156.

209. ***Hallelujah! Praise YHVH…*** David uttered this psalm for the mystery of the name *YHVH*, the most praiseworthy name, which designates *Tif'eret* or the whole spectrum of *sefirot*. Both this psalm and Psalm 150, "the final praise [i.e., psalm] of all," correspond to the Divine Name, but the latter includes the word הללוהו (*haleluhu*), *praise Him*, ten times (actually nine times, plus three similar formulations), while the first five verses of Psalm 148 contain the word הללוהו (*haleluhu*), *praise Him*, seven times (actually six times, plus three similar formulations). The

total of ten alludes to all ten *sefirot* (or "faiths"), while the total of seven alludes to the seven lower *sefirot*.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On *YHVH* as symbolizing all ten *sefirot*, see above, pp. 229–30, n. 368. On the pairing of Psalms 148 and 150, see Rashi on BT *Shabbat* 118b, s.v. *pesuqei de-zimra*.

210. ***from the heavens*—beginning of six directions...** The first verse of this psalm alludes to *Ḥesed*, first of the six *sefirot* emanating from *Binah*. *Heavens* refers to their core, *Tif'eret*, or to all six (*Ḥesed* through *Yesod*). This sefirotic sextet is open to questioning and exploration; questions posed here actually find at least partial answers, whereas those posed about *Binah* remain essentially unanswered, and the highest *sefirot* cannot even be questioned. See above, note 205.

The lower *sefirot* are also known as *primal days*, extending *from one end of the heavens* [namely *Ḥesed*] *to the other end of the heavens* [namely *Yesod*].

In its biblical context, the verse from Deuteronomy refers to God redeeming Israel from Egypt and revealing Himself to them at Mount Sinai. It reads in full: *For ask now of primal days that were before you, from the day God created a human on the earth and from one the end of the heavens to the other end of the heavens, has anything as great as this ever happened or has its like been heard?* In rabbinic literature this verse is interpreted as imposing a limit on cosmological speculation. See BT *Ḥagigah* 11b: "You may inquire concerning *from one end of the heavens to the other end of the heavens*, but you may not inquire concerning what is above, what is below, what came before, what will come after."

On the verse in Deuteronomy, see also *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 18:13; JT *Ḥagigah* 2:1, 77c; *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:10; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 10; *Zohar* 1:1b, 15b, 30a, 85b–86a, 141b, 158a; 2:22a, 93a, 137a, 200a, 211a;

Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 31 (36–37); idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 20, 375; idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 371.

211. ***on the heights*—two directions...** *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, first of the lower *sefirot*, on the right and left.

212. ***all His angels*—two pillars...** *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, the two divine legs, or thighs, supporting *Tif'eret*, the trunk of the divine body. As the thighs move the body, this pair of "angelic" *sefirot* convey the flow of emanation, and from them issue angels who convey the divine will and carry out divine missions.

213. ***all His hosts...*** Alluding to *Yesod*, from whom holy emanation pours into *Shekhinah*, then generating countless angelic forces. *Yesod*, the divine phallus, is the site of the covenant of circumcision.

For the midrashic interpretation of צבאות (*Tseva'ot*), *Hosts*, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 1: "What is the meaning of צבאות (*Tseva'ot*), *Hosts* (Psalms 89:9)? He is אות (*ot*), an ensign, among His צבא (*tsava*), host [or: army]... He is *ot*, an ensign, among His holy myriads." See BT *Ḥagigah* 16a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:7; *Zohar* 1:6a.

214. ***sun and moon*—in Him abides this mystery...** The union of the divine couple, symbolized by *sun and moon*, is effected by *Yesod*, who shares the name *sun* with *Tif'eret*. He is also known as "the firmament," containing the archetypes of heavenly bodies. The full verse in Psalms reads: *Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all stars of light*.

215. **Then Scripture returns above...** The psalm continues: *Praise Him, the heavens of the heavens* (Psalms 148:4). Whereas *Tif'eret* and the *sefirot* around Him are called *the heavens, Binah* is *the heavens of the heavens*, located "in the height of heights," where all the lower *sefirot* are rooted, or "embedded."

A few verses later, the psalm alludes to *Shekhinah*, known as *the earth*, and then to various forces associated with Her. The context (Psalms 148:7–8) reads: *Praise YHVH from the*

earth, sea monsters and all depths. Fire and hail, snow and smoke [or: *fog*], *storm wind fulfilling His word*.

216. **Those stars below…** The stars in heaven derive their existence and power from the flow of emanation, for everything follows the sefirotic pattern. The archetypes of the stars in the firmament of *Yesod* conduct the angelic realm. "From there extend rungs," reaching the stars in heaven, which have no independent power.

The verse in Isaiah, addressed to Babylon, reads: *Let them stand and save you—the astrologers, the stargazers, who announce, month by month* [or: *by each new moon*], *what will come upon you*. Here, Rabbi Shim'on indicates that whatever power the stars possess derives from a divine source. On the archetypes of the stars in *Yesod*, see above, note 214.

217. ***They made the tunics…*** The context (Exodus 39:27–28) reads: *They made the tunics, linen, weaver's work, for Aaron and for his sons, and the turban, linen, and the ornaments of the caps, linen, and the breeches of linen, twisted linen*.

218. ***In the end of days…*** Then God will attend to "the daughter of Jacob," referring both to the people of Israel and their divine representative, *Shekhinah*. Then, the divine couple (symbolized by the sun and the moon) will reunite. *Shekhinah*, pictured as heavenly Jerusalem, will be fully arrayed, shining with light from *Tif'eret*.

On heavenly Jerusalem, see above, note 64. In the verse from Isaiah, *the light of the seven days* refers to the seven days of Creation. On the moon originally shining like the sun, see BT *Ḥullin* 60b (quoted above, p. 255, n. 450).

219. ***At the head of the mountains…*** The plural, *mountains*, would seem to require a matching plural form: *heads*. However, the singular, *head*, alludes to *Ḥesed*, the head of the *sefirot* beneath *Binah*, who are known as *mountains*. *Ḥesed*, on the right side, is also pictured as the high priest, who adorns and blesses *Shekhinah* ("the house"),

thereby "establishing" Her. Rabbi Shim'on is reading the verse as: *In the end of days, the Mount of YHVH's House* [namely *Shekhinah*] *will be established* בראש (*be-rosh*), *by* [rather than: *at*] *the head of, the mountains*. On the sefirotic mountains, see above, p. 69, n. 40.

220. **With what will He adorn Her?...** *Ḥesed*, the high priest, will robe and adorn *Shekhinah* with all six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*. These שש (*shesh*), "six," *sefirot* form the pattern for the priestly garments made of שש (*shesh*), *linen*.

See the verses from Exodus above at note 217. According to rabbinic tradition, the linen yarn used in the Dwelling consisted of six strands. See BT *Yoma* 71b–72a, where שש (*shesh*), *linen*, and ששה (*shishah*), "six," are linked; *Zohar* 2:139a, 234a.

221. **When this house will be adorned...** When *Shekhinah* will be adorned by *Ḥesed*, She will join *Tif'eret* and *be elevated above* Her angelic *hills*.

222. **When the priest spreads his hands...** When the earthly priest spreads his hands to bless the people, he stimulates emanation above, and the sefirotic lamps and lights glow, illumining the face of *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel). All this transpires by means of *Ḥesed*, pictured as both the primordial light and the Priest.

On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 10, n. 25. On the principle "By actions below, an arousal is stimulated above," see *Zohar* 1:35a, 77b–78a, 82b, 86b, 88a, 156b, 164a–b, 233a, 235a, 244a; 2:31b, 35b, 125a, 265a; 3:31b, 38b, 40a, 47b, 92a–b, 105a, 110b, 112b, 145a (*Piq*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 144. Cf. above, notes 130, 203. On Rabbi Shim'on's reading of the verse in Isaiah, see above, note 219.

223. **all other nations have chieftains...** Currently, all other nations are controlled by heavenly princes, but *in the end of days* God will eliminate them and rule directly over all.

On the seventy heavenly princes, see above, p. 40, n. 104. On God punishing or defeating them before dealing with the nations, see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 2; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 8:14; *Devarim Rabbah* 1:22; *Tanḥuma, Bo* 4, *Beshallaḥ* 13, *Mishpatim* 18; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Bo* 6, 19; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:9; 21:5; 23:15; *Midrash Tehillim* 82:3; *Zohar* 1:69a, 86a; 2:6b, 18a–b (*MhN*), 29a, 46b, 49a, 54b, 175a; 3:147a. The verse in Isaiah 24 reads: *YHVH will punish the host of the heights on high and the kings of the earth upon the earth*.

Isaiah 2:3 reads in full: *Many peoples will go and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of YHVH, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His paths." For from Zion will come forth Torah, and the word of YHVH from Jerusalem*.

224. **All when the priest…** This will all transpire when *Ḥesed* illumines *Shekhinah* entirely and constantly. The word ש״ש (*shesh*), which can mean both "six" and "linen," refers here to the "six" *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, illumining *Shekhinah*, and also to the priestly garments made of "linen." See above, notes 219–20.

225. ***Shekhinah* will settle upon us only through words of Torah…** The engagement with Torah attracts the Divine Presence.

See M *Avot* 3:2, in the name of Rabbi Ḥanina son of Teradyon: "If two are sitting with words of Torah between them, *Shekhinah* is between them." See ibid. 3:3, 6; BT *Berakhot* 6a. On the importance of engaging in Torah while walking or traveling, see Deuteronomy 6:7; M *Avot* 3:7; BT *Eruvin* 54a, *Ta'anit* 10b; *Zohar* 1:7a, 58b, 69b–70a, 76a, 87a, 115b, 157a, 164a, 230a–b; 2:13a, 95a, 138b, 155b, 188b.

226. **Let the leader open first!…** Referring to Rabbi El'azar, son of the great Rabbi Shim'on. Cf. BT *Horayot* 14a.

227. ***Puny am I…*** Having been identified as "the leader," Rabbi El'azar begins with a modest verse.

Sometimes King David praised himself as God's *anointed, raised on high*, and at other times he described himself in lowly terms such as *poor and needy, puny and despised, rejected*.

Rabbinic tradition applies the verse from Psalm 118 to David, youngest of Jesse's sons, relegated to tending the flock. In the *Zohar*, the "rejection" of *the stone* alludes to the diminishment of the light of *Shekhinah* (symbolized by David), while the image of *the cornerstone* symbolizes Her vital role in the sefirotic structure and process. See 1 Samuel 16:11; BT *Pesaḥim* 119a; *Midrash Shemu'el* 19:7; *Yalqut ha-Makhiri*, Psalms 118:22, par. 28; *Bahir* 61 (91), 131 (190); *Zohar* 1:20a–b, 72a, 89b (*ST*), 197b, 231a, 246b; 3:142b (*IR*), 152b, 182a.

On David's lowliness, see Psalms 131:1–2; JT *Sanhedrin* 2:3, 20b; *Midrash Tehillim* 131:1: *Bemidbar Rabbah* 4:20; *Zohar* 2:101b. The full verse in Psalm 18 reads: *Giving great victories to His king, showing kindness to His anointed, to David and his seed forever*. Cf. the variant in 2 Samuel 22:51, immediately preceding the verse quoted next by Rabbi El'azar.

228. **when he reached the rung of peace...** When King David ruled in peace and dispensed justice, he praised himself.

229. **whoever does so...** Se BT *Eruvin* 13b: "Whoever humbles himself, the blessed Holy One elevates; and whoever elevates himself, the blessed Holy One humbles.

On David as the future King Messiah, see JT *Berakhot* 2:3, 5a; *Eikhah Rabbah* 1:51; BT *Sanhedrin* 98b; *Zohar* 1:82b; 3:84a; *ZḤ* 53a; Ginzberg, *Legends*, 6:272, n. 128. Cf. *Zohar* 1:72b; 2:239b–240a. According to kabbalistic theory, the Messiah will be a reincarnation of King David. Cf. the saying cited by Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi in BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 25a (based on Psalms 89:38): "David, King of Israel, lives and endures."

The verse quoted from Hosea is actually conflated here with Jeremiah 30:9. On the verse from Psalms, see above, note 227.

230. **When the moon is deprived of light…** When *Shekhinah* is not illumined by Her partner, *Tif'eret*, She turns dark and poor. When the two are reunited, *Shekhinah* glows and rules the world.

231. **So David adorned himself…** David, the ideal king, symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom); so he reflects Her various states of being.

By making oneself lowly, a person becomes available and attractive to God. On God's human vessels, see above, pp. 243–44, n. 417. The verse in Isaiah reads: *I dwell on high, in holiness, and with the crushed and lowly in spirit—reviving the spirit of the lowly, reviving the heart of the crushed*.

Now that Rabbi El'azar has begun modestly by exploring the theme of lowliness, he is ready to proceed. See above, note 227.

232. ***He brought me there…*** From Babylon, the prophet Ezekiel is transported by God to Mount Zion, the site of the Temple, which had been destroyed twenty-five years earlier. The bronze figure appearing to Ezekiel holds two measuring devices, by which he demonstrates to the prophet the dimensions of the future Temple.

Rabbi El'azar equates this bronze figure with *the man clothed in linen*, mentioned elsewhere by Ezekiel and traditionally identified as the angel Gabriel. Here, though, he is described simply as *a man*. Gabriel is associated with *Gevurah* or *Din* (Judgment), on the left. When he comes to execute Judgment, he is *clothed in linen*, but in this case he came to delineate the dimensions of the Temple, so he wore different garments.

According to the *Zohar*, angels can perform tasks in the world only if they assume earthly form—as when angels appeared to Abraham in human form (Genesis 18). See

above, note 160. On *the man clothed in linen*, see Ezekiel 9:2–3, 11; 10:2, 6–7; Daniel 10:5; 12:6–7. On Gabriel as this figure, see above, note 193.

233. ***Whose appearance was like bronze…*** Symbolizing lower forces. On *mountains of bronze*, see *Zohar* 2:135a, 139a, 229a, 260a (*Heikh*). On the bronze appearance of the figure here, see Daniel 10:5–6, where *one man clothed in linen* is described as follows: *His arms and legs had the gleam of burnished bronze*. Cf. also Ezekiel 1:7, where the living creatures carrying the Divine Chariot-Throne are described as having legs *sparkling like the gleam of burnished bronze*.

234. **This one brought measuring tools…** The angel carried *a cord of flax and the measuring reed* in order to delineate the dimensions of the future Temple in Jerusalem (“below”). Rabbi El’azar indicates that *the measuring reed* derives from, but is not identical with, the Lamp of Adamantine Darkness, which initially radiated from *Ein Sof* and delineated the stages of emanation. Afterward, this primordial Lamp ascended, returning to its scintillating source, and from its residual radiance below *the measuring reed* congealed.

“The Lamp of Adamantine Darkness” renders בוסינא דקרדינותא (*bosina de-qardinuta*)—or according to some manuscripts and the printed editions, בוצינא דקרדינותא (*botsina de-qardinuta*). This divine tool is so potently brilliant that it overwhelms comprehension. On the multivalent, paradoxical phrase, see Vol. 1, pp. 107–8, n. 4; Vol. 5, pp. 560–61, n. 35; *ZḤ* 57d–58a (*QhM*); *Zohar* 1:15a, 18b, 86b; 2:133b, 177a (*SdTs*), 254b (*Heikh*), 260a (*Heikh*); 3:48b–49a, 135b (*IR*), 139a (*IR*), 292b (*IZ*), 295a–b (*IZ*); Liebes, *Peraqim*, 145–51, 161–64; idem, “Zohar ve-Eros,” 73–80; Wolfson, “Woman—the Feminine as Other in Theosophic Kabbalah,” 178–82; idem, *Circle in the Square*, 60–62. Liebes also explores the connection between *qardinuta* and measurement.

235. ***the measuring reed…the measuring line…*** The angel appearing to Ezekiel used *the measuring reed* (along with *a cord of flax*) to delineate the dimensions of the Temple, whereas for the Dwelling *the measuring line* was employed.

The term קו המדה (*qav ha-middah*), *the measuring line*, appears in Jeremiah 31:39, in a description of the future rebuilding of Jerusalem. On *the measuring line*, see *Zohar* 2:258a (*Heikh*); *ZḤ* 31c, 33a–d, 56d–58d (the section called *Qav ha-Middah*), 86a (*MhN, Rut*); *TZ* 18, 37b. In *Qav ha-Middah* 57a, 58b, and *TZ* 18, 37b, *the measuring line* is identified with the Lamp (or Spark) of Adamantine Darkness. On the distinction between *the measuring reed* and *the measuring line*, see *Or Yaqar*; Vital; *Miqdash Melekh*; Liebes, *Peraqim*, 146; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

236. **In the Dwelling, by that measurement below…** *The measuring line* resembles the *cord of flax* in the sense that a knot appears at each cubit. In the description of the dimensions of the curtains (for covering the Dwelling), the full verse reads: *The length of each curtain twenty-eight by the cubit and a width four by the cubit for each curtain, a single measure for all the curtains*. The singular wording *by the cubit* implies that *the measuring line* extended wondrously cubit by cubit as far as necessary.

237. **This emerges from mystery of the Lamp…** *The measuring line* emerges from the Lamp of Adamantine Darkness. (See above, note 234.) The 1500 aspects of "the miniature measurement below" (namely of the Dwelling) correspond to the number 150, which is the total of the length (100 cubits) and the width (50 cubits) of the court (or enclosure) of the Dwelling. The number 12,000 may reflect the twelve tribes. For each measurement, *the measuring line* extended cubit by cubit. See the preceding note.

238. ***Twenty-eight by the cubit…*** The dimensions of each linen curtain add up to thirty-two, corresponding to the thirty-two paths of Wisdom (mentioned at the beginning of *Sefer Yetsirah*).

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, gauged the heavens with a span, held in a measure the dust of the earth, and weighed mountains on a scale and hills in a balance?* Here, *the earth* may allude to *Shekhinah*, who is known as Lower Wisdom, containing the flow of emanation from all thirty-two paths of Wisdom.

239. **When the length is measured…** The length of each curtain is twenty-eight cubits, or four times seven. This potent number symbolizes *Shekhinah*, seventh of the lower *sefirot*, who contains the flow from all thirty-two paths of Wisdom. She is also known as the Holy Name, revealing the divine being.

240. **But it is written: a *single measure*…** Which seems to imply that the curtains were measured in one long measurement, not cubit after cubit. However, Rabbi El'azar insists that *a single measure* means here "one cubit," by which the curtains were wondrously measured. See above, note 236.

241. **a measurement of intense holiness…** The covering of the Dwelling comprised four separate layers: linen, goat hair, ram skins, and, uppermost, leather. The linen curtains constituting the innermost layer are very holy; covering them are curtains of עזים (*izzim*), "goat hair, goats," suggesting שעיר (*sa'ir*), "goat, demon, satyr," and the scapegoat sent to the demon Azazel (Leviticus 16). These goat-hair curtains symbolize powers outside the divine realm that protect the inner, holy powers.

Whereas the dimensions of the linen curtains totaled thirty-two (twenty-eight cubits long by four cubits wide), the dimensions of the goat-hair curtains totaled thirty-four

(thirty cubits long by four cubits wide). See Exodus 36:9, 15; above, notes 236, 238; p. 213, n. 316.

242. **the first measurement is holy…** The measurement of the linen curtains forming the innermost layer of the covering is holy, and its colors symbolize various sefirotic potencies. Apparently, the white *linen* symbolizes *Ḥesed*; *violet* symbolizes *Shekhinah*; *purple* symbolizes *Tif'eret*; and *crimson* symbolizes *Gevurah*. (See above, notes 106, 158.) Whereas the dimensions of the linen curtains total thirty-two (corresponding to the thirty-two paths of Wisdom), the dimensions of the goat-hair curtains total thirty-four, the numerical equivalent of the word דל (*dal*), "poor," alluding to the lack characteristic of demonic forces.

Here, apparently, the verse in Psalms implies that one should beware of *poor* demonic forces; *on the day of evil*—when such forces threaten—*YHVH* (namely the holy forces represented by the linen curtains and the thirty-two paths of Wisdom) *will deliver him*.

As explained in the previous note, *goat hair* implies demonic forces. Yet, such forces are provided "a place in mystery of holiness," covering and protecting the inner powers symbolized by the linen curtains. On the portion provided to demonic forces, see above, pp. 16–17, n. 44; pp. 37–38, n. 97.

The full verse in Exodus 36 reads: *Every wise-hearted one among those doing the work made the Dwelling—ten curtains of twisted linen, and violet, purple, and crimson; with cherubim of designer's work they made them*.

243. ***I went down to the nut grove…*** The nut symbolizes the divine kernel surrounded and protected by demonic shells. The same image pertains to the Dwelling, so "it is called a *nut*."

On the image of the nut, see *Zohar* 1:19b–20a (Vol. 1, p. 151, n. 341), 44b; 2:15b (*MhN*), 140b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 156–60 (also quoting the verse from Habakkuk); Scholem, *Major Trends*, 239; Altmann, *Studies*,

172–79; Pope, *Song of Songs*, 574–79. On the nut symbolizing the Dwelling, cf. Rashi on Song of Songs 6:11 (mentioning the Second Temple). The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *I went down to the nut grove to see the verdure of the valley, to see if the vines had blossomed, if the pomegranates had bloomed*.

244. **Whoever increases, decreases ...** This rabbinic principle is exemplified by the seventy bulls offered on the festival of *Sukkot* (known as the Festival). According to Numbers 29:12–34, on each subsequent day of *Sukkot* the number of bulls offered decreases (thirteen, twelve,... seven), finally reaching a total of seventy. Thus, as the days of the Festival increase, the number of bulls offered each day decreases. According to rabbinic tradition, these offerings are intended for the seventy nations of the world. Here, the gradual diminishment of the offerings befits the alien nature of the foreign nations' princes, who deserve to receive less and less.

The same principle—Whoever increases, decreases—applies to the covering of the Dwelling. Whereas the inner layer consists of ten linen curtains, the next layer consists of עשתי עשרה (*ashtei esreh*), *eleven, curtains* of goat hair, symbolizing demonic powers. The letter ע (*ayin*), which begins the number עשתי עשרה (*ashtei esreh*), *eleven*, turns עשרה שתי (*shetei esreh*), "twelve," into *ashtei esreh, eleven*. Thus the added letter actually decreases. This reduction befits the demonic realm, which is characterized by lack and deficiency.

The dimensions of the goat-hair curtains are thirty-four, whereas those of the linen curtains are thirty-two. The higher number pertaining to the demonic goat-hair curtains involves a decrease in holy value; the lower number pertaining to the holy linen curtains involves an increase in value. See above, notes 238, 242.

On the seventy bulls, nations, and heavenly princes, see above, p. 40, n. 104. On the gradual diminishment of the

Festival offerings, see BT *Sukkah* 47a; *Tanḥuma, Pinḥas* 17; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pinḥas* 16; *Leqaḥ Tov*, Numbers 29:36; *Zohar* 2:135a; 3:24b, 258b–259a.

On עשתי עשרה (*ashtei esreh*), "eleven," and שתי עשרה (*shetei esreh*)—or שתי עשר (*shetei asar*)—"twelve," see above, pp. 220–21, n. 338. See also BT *Sanhedrin* 29a, where Rav Ashi cites *ashtei esreh* as an example of the maxim "Whoever increases, decreases." On דל (*dal*), "poor," as signifying total impoverishment, see *Zohar* 2:218b; *ZḤ* 49a.

Exodus 26:1 reads in full: *The Dwelling you shall make of ten curtains of twisted linen, and blue, purple, and crimson; with cherubim of designer's work you shall make them*. Exodus 26:7 reads in full: *You shall make curtains of goat hair for a tent over the Dwelling, eleven curtains you shall make them*.

245. ***The measuring line*** **begins to extend…** Measuring out the boards for the structure of the Dwelling that holds the curtains. The boards of acacia wood symbolize the angels known as seraphim, as Rabbi El'azar demonstrates by verbal analogy: the word עומדים (*omedim*), *standing*, *upright*, describes both the *acacia wood* in the Dwelling and the *seraphim* seen by the prophet Isaiah. Just as the seraphim accompany *Shekhinah*, so the boards provide Her with a dwelling.

On the analogy between *seraphim* and *acacia wood*, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 1:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 3:11; *Shemot Rabbah* 33:4; 35:6; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:8; *Zohar* 2:139a, 147b, 169a, 170a. The context in Isaiah (6:1–2) reads: *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw my Lord, seated on a high and lofty throne, the hem of His robe filling the Temple. Seraphim were standing above Him* [or: *in attendance on Him*, or: *above it*, namely above the throne]. *Each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his legs, and with two he flew*.

246. ***Ten cubits the length of the board…*** In describing the length of the linen curtains, Scripture employs the singular wording (*twenty-eight*) *by the cubit*, whereas here, in describing the length of the boards, the plural form *ten cubits* appears. The purpose of this particular plural wording is to allude to the ten *sefirot*, which consist of three triads, with *Keter* resting upon them. The three triads may be *Ḥokhmah, Binah*, and *Da'at*; *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*; *Netsaḥ, Hod*, and *Yesod*—or alternatively, *Ḥokhmah, Ḥesed*, and *Netsaḥ* on the right; *Binah, Gevurah*, and *Hod* on the left; *Da'at, Tif'eret*, and *Yesod* in the middle. Alternatively, *ten cubits* alludes to nine camps of seraphim, with a spirit resting upon them. Cf. above, note 138. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

247. **extent of the cubit…** As mentioned earlier, the dimensions of each linen curtain totaled thirty-two cubits. (See above, note 238.) As for the boards, the dimensions of each one totaled eleven and a half: *Ten cubits the length of the board, and a cubit and a half the width of the single board* (Exodus 36:21). The clause "ascending yet not ascending…" may mean that this total of eleven and a half strives toward the number twelve but without attaining it, because the seraphim (symbolized by the boards) are fewer than the angels known as *ofanim* (wheels).

The northern and southern walls of the Dwelling each comprised twenty boards, here divided into two groups of ten. Halfway up the boards ran a crossbar also made of acacia wood, as described in Exodus 26:28: *The central bar in the middle of the planks, running from end to end*. In the *Zohar* this *central bar* can symbolize *Tif'eret*, the central *sefirah* spanning *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, or *Binah* and *Shekhinah*.

For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; *Haggahot Maharḥu*; *Miqdash Melekh*; Soncino; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the *ofanim*, see Ezekiel 1:16–21; 10:9–19. On the *central bar*, see *Zohar* 1:1b, 148b (*ST*),

224a; 2:51b, 174b; 3:186a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 7; idem, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 41–42 (49–51).

248. **Mystery of this measurement… totals 230…** The dimensions of each of the twenty boards (of the northern and southern walls of the Dwelling) total eleven and a half cubits (ten cubits long and a cubit and half wide). The total dimensions of all twenty boards are thus 230.

249. **Curtains of the Dwelling…** These curtains symbolize heaven, as implied by the verse in Psalms. According to rabbinic tradition, the clasps fastening together the curtains of the Dwelling "looked like stars in the sky." (See above, note 208.) The phrase "the count that we have mentioned" refers to the total dimensions of each linen curtain, namely thirty-two. (See above, note 238.)

The curtains "mentioned in one mystery" are the linen curtains (symbolizing the divine kernel), while the "curtains in another mystery" are the goat-hair curtains (symbolizing the demonic shell protecting the kernel). See above, notes 241–43. Both elements are necessary, and wisdom includes knowing how they interact and how to distinguish between them.

"The mystery of the first measurement" refers to the measurement of the linen curtains, on whose "many aspects" see above, notes 236–42. On the verse in Psalms in relation to the curtains of the Dwelling, see *Zohar* 2:164b.

250. **Mystery of the ark…** The ark often symbolizes *Shekhinah*, who obtains and receives the flow of emanation from the *sefirot* above Her, both on the right and the left, in addition to what She possesses of Her own. The measurement of the ark's length is *two and a half cubits*—implying one measure of emanation from each side above and "a half of its own."

The width and height of the ark are each *a cubit and a half*—implying, apparently, that *Shekhinah* obtains one measure from *Yesod* ("that side"), thereby "obtaining more,"

and “a half of its own.” The flow from above can reach *Shekhinah* only if She already possesses this half.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood, two and a half cubits its length and a cubit and a half its width and a cubit and a half its height*.

251. **why the ark is overlaid with gold…** Symbolizing *Gevurah*, who is closely linked with *Shekhinah*. The phrase “based on the first measurement” refers to the measurement of the linen curtains, apparently to the wondrous way that *the measuring line* extended cubit by cubit. See above, note 236.

On the ark, see Exodus 25:11: *You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and outside you shall overlay it, and you shall make upon it a golden rim all around*. On the table, see Exodus 25:23–24: *You shall make a table of acacia wood, two cubits its length and a cubit its width and a cubit and a half its height. You shall overlay it with pure gold, and make for it a golden rim all around*.

252. **However, this measure…** The measurement of the ark (which was based on the wondrous measurement of the curtains, mentioned by Rabbi Shim’on) was not used elsewhere in the Dwelling—or is not to be imitated by anyone. On discerning, see above at note 249.

253. **All other works…** All the other components of the Dwelling were measured by the cubit, except for the high priest’s breastpiece, which was measured by the hand span (half a cubit), as described in Exodus 28:16: *It shall be square and doubled, a span its length and a span its width*.

254. **The tunic…** According to Exodus 39:27, this garment, worn by all the priests, was made of שׁשׁ (*shesh*), *linen*. The word *shesh* can also mean “six,” and according to rabbinic tradition, the linen yarn used in the Dwelling consisted of six strands. Here, “six” also alludes to the six *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod*, the first of which is symbolized by the priest. By wearing these garments of

shesh (*linen*), the priest is arrayed, as it were, in all *shesh* (six) *sefirot*. See above, notes 220, 224.

The measuring line was used for the various measurements of the Dwelling and is elsewhere described as delineating the stages of emanation. See above, notes 234–37. For the verse in Exodus describing the linen tunics, see above, note 217.

255. ***The measuring reed…*** By which the angel appearing to Ezekiel delineated the dimensions of the future Temple in Jerusalem, which will endure forever. When the Temple is eventually built, this wondrous *measuring reed* will enable it to expand immensely, and the evil eye will be powerless against it. Holiness will then fill the world.

On *the measuring reed*, see above, notes 232, 234. On the expansion of Jerusalem, see *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 1: "How do we know that Jerusalem is destined to extend to Damascus? As is said, *Damascus shall be His resting place* (Zechariah 9:1); and *resting place* is none other than Jerusalem, as is said: *This is My resting place forever* (Psalms 132:14).... How do I explain *The side chambers widened as they wound higher and higher, for the winding of the house went higher and higher round about the house; therefore the house widened as it went upward* [or: *therefore the breadth* (of the side chambers) *toward the house increased* (as one went) *upward*] (Ezekiel 41:7)? That the land of Israel is destined to expand and ascend on all sides, like a fig tree that is narrow below and broad above, and the gates of Jerusalem are destined to reach Damascus."

The context in Ezekiel describes side chambers in the future Temple and a winding staircase. Apparently, the side chambers in the upper stories were larger because the wall diminished in thickness as it ascended. Thus, as one climbed the spiral staircase, the side chambers took up more room or *widened*. In the rabbinic sources and here in

the *Zohar*, the verse demonstrates that the Temple (or Jerusalem, or the whole land of Israel) is destined to expand.

On the expansion of Jerusalem, see also *Bereshit Rabbah* 5:7; *Vayiqra Rabbah* 10:9; BT *Pesaḥim* 50a, *Bava Batra* 75b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 12:22; 20:7; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 7:5; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 1, 2a; 21, 103b; 41, 172b–173a; *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 12; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Yitro* 14, *Tsav* 16; *Zohar* 2:220a; 3:56a.

The full verse in Samuel reads: *I will set aside a place for My people, for Israel, and plant them, and they shall abide there and no longer tremble, and the wicked shall afflict them no more, as before*.

256. **Rabbi Yehudah opened after him…** After Rabbi El'azar. See above at note 227.

The deepest secrets, corresponding to the highest sefirotic realm, are accessible only to those who revere God intensely. Certain other secrets correspond to *Yesod* (the divine phallus, symbolized by the covenant of circumcision), which is more revealed than the highest realm; so these secrets are disclosed *to them*—to a wider audience.

The verse in Psalms reads: *The counsel* [or: *secret*] *of YHVH is for those who fear* [or: *revere*] *Him, and to them He reveals His covenant*. On this verse, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 49:2; *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 19, *Vayera* 5–6; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Lekh Lekha* 23, *Vayera* 6; *Midrash Tehillim* 25:13; Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush Shir ha-Shirim*, 526; *Zohar* 1:37b, 73a, 95a, 236b; 2:75a, 237b; 3:43b (*Piq*), 48a, 79a, 91–92a; 127b (*IR*), 141b (*IR*), 294b (*IZ*); Moses de León, *Shushan Edut*, 339; idem, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 226–28.

257. ***for those who fear Him…*** The deepest secrets can be terrifying, whereas certain others are more accessible and comprehensible. For the rendering *those who fear Him*, see the preceding note.

258. **By forty-two letters …** The Name of Forty-two Letters is mentioned in the name of Rav, though not

recorded, in BT *Qiddushin* 71a. According to Jacob ben Meir Tam (Rabbenu Tam), this name consists of the first forty-two letters of the Torah, from the ב (*bet*) of בראשית (*Be-reshit*), *In the beginning*, through the ב (*vet*) of בהו (*vohu*), *empty* (*or void*) (Genesis 1:2). By this complex divine name, the world came into being.

Hai Gaon indicates that the Name of Forty-two Letters consists of the letters נגדיכש, בטרצתג, חקבטנע, יגלפזק, שקוצית, אבגיתץ, קרעשטן, which are also the initial letters of the forty-two words constituting the prayer *Anna be-Khoaḥ* (Please, with the Strength [of Your Right Hand's Greatness]). On the Name of Forty-two Letters, see above, p. 8, n. 21. On letters ascending and descending, see *Zohar* 1:30a–b, 33b; 2:130b, 132b; Vol. 5, pp. 230–31, nn. 112–13.

259. **those letters emerged...** Through their combinations and permutations, these forty-two letters fashioned the upper world of emanation (characterized by unity) and the lower worlds beneath *Shekhinah* (subject to multiplicity). Those lower realms are nourished by the flow proceeding from *Ḥesed*, symbolized by the south.

The phrase *mountains of Beter* renders הרי בתר (*harei vater*). The word *vater* is interpreted variously and is probably derived from the root meaning "to cut, divide," thus denoting "cleft, jagged, craggy" mountains. See *Zohar* 1:29b, 62a, 158a.

260. **When Thought arises ...** When *Ḥokhmah* is aroused within *Keter* (known as Will), from *Ein Sof*, one ray extends, becoming the palace of *Binah*, and they (apparently *Ḥokhmah* and *Binah*) approach one another to unite. See *Zohar* 1:29b; 2:220b.

261. **Since this is the secret...** The first half of the verse in Psalms alludes to the hidden essence of the forty-two letters, while the second half alludes to their activity revealed below. On this verse, see above, notes 256–57.

The clause "patterns leaping (in their engravings openly)" is a conjectural rendering of the weird wording

טטקוטאי מסינטן (*tatqota'ei mesintan*), based on *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot*, 180. There, the first word is spelled טסקוסאי (*tasqosa'ei*) and linked with *Targum Yonatan*, Ezekiel 43:10: טקוסיה (*tiqquseih*), "its pattern," (recorded in *Bei'ur ha-Millim ha-Zarot* as טסקוסטיה [*tisqusteih*]), deriving from Greek *taxis*, "arrangement, order." See Scholem.

The second word, *mesintan*, may be based on a midrashic description of the angels seen by Jacob in his dream, *ascending and descending* a ladder (Genesis 28:12). According to one view recorded in *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:10, the angels were actually *ascending and descending* on Jacob, namely "exalting him and degrading him, dancing and leaping on him, סונטים (*sonetim*), mocking, him." Here, perhaps, *mesintan* is related phonetically to *sonetim*, but semantically to the verb that precedes *sonetim*: "leaping." The biblical context of *ascending and descending* matches the ascending and descending letters (see above, note 258). For other interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Scholem.

262. ***the Urim and the Thummim...*** On this oracular device, see above, note 174, which quotes BT *Yoma* 73b: "Why were they called אורים ותומים (*urim ve-tummim*)? *Urim*—שמאירין (*she-me'irin*), for they illumine [or: elucidate], their words. *Tummim* [understood here as based on the root תמם (*tmm*), "to be complete"]—for they fulfill their words."

Here Rabbi Yehudah associates the Urim with *Tif'eret*, known as "the speculum that shines." (See above, p. 100, n. 119.) The phrase "embedded in it" refers to the forty-two letters of the Urim embedded in the breastpiece. The Thummim are linked with *Shekhinah*, "the speculum that does not shine." (See above, note 15.) These Thummim contain seventy-two letters, namely the Name of Seventy-two Letters. This name is associated with *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who influence and "conduct" *Shekhinah*.

On the Name of Seventy-two Letters, see *Zohar* 2:51b–52a, 132b; Vol. 4, pp. 257–64 and esp. nn. 216, 221–26. On

the connection between this name and the Urim and Thummim, see *Ba'al ha-Turim* on Exodus 28:30; Recanati on Exodus 28:30, 51a; Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*, 105–8.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *You shall place in the breastpiece of judgment the Urim and Thummim, that they be over Aaron's heart when he comes before YHVH, and Aaron shall carry the judgment for the Children of Israel over his heart before YHVH perpetually.*

263. **When those letters are embedded...** The high priest would consult the (letters of the) Urim and Thummim, which were embedded in his breastpiece. After he posed a question, certain letters of the names of the tribes, engraved in the twelve stones affixed to the breastpiece, would protrude and shine in combination, indicating the answer. See above, note 170.

The phrase "proceed according to mystery of Torah" may refer to the fact that the Name of Forty-two Letters consists of the first forty-two letters of Genesis (see above, note 258), while the Name of Seventy-two Letters is derived from three consecutive verses in Exodus (see the references to this name listed in the preceding note).

264. **ב (*Bet*), with which Torah begins...** The first two letters of the Hebrew alphabet appear as the initial letters of the first four words of the Torah. The first two words, ברא בראשית (*Be-reshit bara*), *In the beginning created*, begin with the letter ב (*bet*); the next two words, את אלהיט (*Elohim et*), *God*, begin with א (*alef*). The opening letter of the Torah, ב (*bet*), signifies בינה (*Binah*), the Divine Mother. The letter א (*alef*) signifies אבא (*Abba*), the Divine "Father," *Ḥokhmah*. *Binah* emanates the lower *sefirot*, while the cosmic *alef* includes and generates all twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

On *alef* as male and *bet* as female, see *Zohar* 1:200a; *ZḤ* 74c (*ShS*). Cf. *Zohar* 2:228a. This passage (extending through the following paragraph) appears with slight variation in *Zohar* 1:30a.

265. **ה (*He*)—coupling…** The full verse reads: בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ (*Be-reshit bara Elohim et ha-shamayim ve-et ha-arets*), *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*. The word השמים (*ha-shamayim*), *the heaven*, consists of the letter ה (*he*)—a feminine marker and the second letter of יהוה (*YHVH*), symbolizing *Binah*—and שמים (*shamayim*), *heaven*, symbolizing *Tif'eret*. *Binah* enlivens *Tif'eret* with the flow of emanation and establishes Him as the core of the lower *sefirot*.

In the phrase ואת הארץ (*ve-et ha-arets*), *and the earth*, the letter ו (*vav*)—the third letter of יהוה (*YHVH*), whose numerical value is six—symbolizes *Tif'eret* together with the five *sefirot* surrounding Him. *Tif'eret* conveys the flow to *Shekhinah*, symbolized by *earth*. This flow is pictured as an alphabetical stream, containing all twenty-two letters from א (*alef*) to ת (*tav*), which are indicated by the word את (*et*).

266. **The Dwelling was established only by Moses…** Fittingly, the Dwelling (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) was erected by Moses, who symbolizes *Tif'eret*. From the aspect of *Tif'eret*, "another rung" (apparently *Yesod*) was aroused to sustain *Shekhinah*.

"Those letters with which heaven and earth were created" refers here apparently to the Name of Forty-two Letters. See above, note 258. Cf. BT *Berakhot* 55a, in the name of Rav: "Bezalel knew how to combine the letters by which heaven and earth were created."

On Moses alone being able to erect the Dwelling, see *Shemot Rabbah* 52:4; *Zohar* 2:235b, 238b, 240a, 241b. On the significance of Moses' act, see *Zohar* 2:196b, 239b–242b. On the correspondence between the Dwelling and the world, see above, note 6.

267. **all the works of the Dwelling were fashioned by Bezalel…** See the passage from BT *Berakhot* quoted in the preceding note. The name בצלאל (*Betsal'el*) can be read as בצל אל (*be-tsel El*), "in the shadow of God," indicating that he imitated God's creative power. Just as *Shekhinah* (the

supernal Dwelling) was emanated by a divine flow pictured as a stream of letters, so the earthly Dwelling was fashioned by Bezalel through the creative power of letters. On Bezalel's name, see above, note 6.

268. **intention aroused by those letters...** By expertly combining the letters, Bezalel was able to fashion the various components of the Dwelling. However, Moses alone knew the deep intention behind these creative letters, so only he was capable of actually erecting the Dwelling.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *Moses erected the Dwelling and placed its sockets and set up its boards and inserted its bars and erected its posts*.

269. **Rabbi Yitsḥak opened after him...** After Rabbi Yehudah. See above at note 256.

King David uttered this psalm concerning *Shekhinah*, who is known as Assembly of Israel. She is delighted by Her partner, *Tif'eret*, who is known as the blessed Holy One and symbolized by Torah. *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom), reigns over Israel.

On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 10, n. 25. On Torah as strength (based on the verse in Psalm 29), see *Mekhilta, Shirta* 3; *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 15:2; 19:16; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 343; BT *Zevaḥim* 116a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:4; 2:3; *Midrash Tehillim* 8:4; 21:2; *Zohar* 1:240a; 2:58a, 94a; 3:13a, 269a.

The context in Psalm 21 (2–7) reads: *YHVH, in Your strength the king rejoices, and in Your victory how greatly he exults! His heart's desire You gave to him, and his lips' request You did not withhold. Selah. For You met him with blessings of bounty, You set on his head a crown of pure gold. Life he asked of You—You gave it to him, length of days forever and ever. Great is his glory through Your victory; splendor and majesty You bestowed upon him. For You granted him blessings forever, gladdened him with the joy of Your presence*.

270. ***And in Your victory ...*** *Shekhinah* (*the king*) exults in the *victory* of *Ḥesed*, the divine right hand. The quotation *My right hand gave Me victory* is a paraphrase of Isaiah 63:5: *My arm gave Me victory*. Cf. Psalms 98:1: *His right hand gave Him victory*. See *Zohar* 2:169a.

271. **an extra י (*yod*)** ... The word יגיל (*yagel*), *he exults*, is normally spelled יגל (*yagel*). The extra י (*yod*) signifies *Yesod* (the divine phallus, symbolized by the covenant of circumcision), who brings joy to *Shekhinah*.

In rabbinic literature, the mark of circumcision is identified with the י (*yod*) of the divine name שדי (*Shaddai*), which is also the initial letter of יהוה (*YHVH*). See *Tanḥuma, Tsav* 14, *Shemini* 8; see above, p. 233, n. 381.

272. ***Life he asked of You...*** According to a midrashic tradition, King David was destined to die at childbirth, but Adam offered him 70 of his own 1000 allotted years, so David lived for 70 years and Adam for 930.

See Genesis 5:5; Jubilees 4:30; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 19, and David Luria, ad loc., n. 31; *Midrash Tehillim* 92:10; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:12; *Bereshit Rabbati* 5:5; *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Genesis 41; *Zohar* 1:55a–b, 91b, 140a, 168a (quoting the verse *Life he asked of You*...), 233b, 248b; 2:103b; *ZḤ* 67d (*ShS*), 81a (*MhN, Rut*); Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 68 (85); idem, *Sod Eser Sefirot Belimah*, 383. The full verse in Psalms reads: *Life he asked of You—You gave it to him, length of days forever and ever*.

273. ***Great is his glory...*** *Shekhinah*, the divine *glory*, is called *great*, as confirmed by the wording in Psalm 147: *Great is* אדונינו (*adoneinu*), *our Lord*, referring to *Shekhinah*, who is known as אדני (*Adonai*), "my Lord."

Originally, according to rabbinic tradition, the sun and the moon (*the two great lights*) were equally *great*, but then the moon's light was diminished. Nevertheless, *Shekhinah* is still called *great*, and in fact, Her partner (the blessed Holy One, *YHVH*) is Himself called *great* only when

united with Her, as indicated by Psalm 48: *Great is YHVH…in the city of our God*—alluding to *Shekhinah*.

See *Zohar* 3:5a; *ZḤ* 44a, 51c–d. On the diminishment of the moon, see above, p. 255, n. 450.) The full verse in Genesis reads: *God made the two great lights, the great light for dominion of day and the small light for dominion of night, and the stars*.

274. ***For You granted him blessings…*** *Shekhinah* is the source of blessing for all. Rabbi Yitsḥak may be playing with בְּרָכָה (*berakhah*), "blessing," and בְּרֵכָה (*berekhah*), "pool." The full verse in Genesis reads: *I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing*.

275. ***You will gladden him with joy…*** Just as Jethro *was glad* for God's redeeming Israel from Egyptian slavery, so eventually *You will gladden Shekhinah*, redeeming Her and Her people from exile. The blessed Holy One will embrace *Shekhinah* with His right hand, *Ḥesed*, and He will renew Her, as the moon (symbolizing *Shekhinah*) is renewed by the sun (symbolizing *Tif'eret*, the blessed Holy One). *Shekhinah*'s emptiness will then be reversed.

On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 10, n. 25. On the exile of *Shekhinah*, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 14, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: "Wherever Israel went in exile, *Shekhinah*, as it were, went into exile with them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* went into exile with them…. When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* went into exile with them…. And when in the future they return, *Shekhinah*, as it were, will return with them." See above, pp. 234–35, n. 386.

The verse in Ezekiel is spoken, as it were, by the city of Tyre, gloating over the fall of Jerusalem: *I shall be filled, now that she is destroyed*. Here, Rabbi Yitsḥak transforms the meaning of the verse and imagines that it is spoken not by Tyre but by heavenly Jerusalem, namely *Shekhinah*.

The verse in Psalm 21 reads: *You gladdened* [or: *will gladden*] *him with the joy of Your presence*. The full verse in Exodus reads: *Jethro rejoiced* [or: *was glad*] *over all the good that YHVH had done for Israel, in delivering them from the hand of Egypt*.

276. **When Moses was about to erect…** Fittingly, Moses, who symbolizes *Tif'eret*, erected the Dwelling, which symbolizes *Shekhinah*. The various components of the Dwelling symbolize the angelic *virgins* accompanying *Shekhinah*. All was brought to Moses, "as a bride is brought to the house of the groom."

See above, note 266; and *Zohar* 1:239a–b; 2:238a (both discussing the verse *They brought the Dwelling to Moses*). On Moses as the husband of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 27; pp. 103–4, n. 128. On bringing the bride to the groom's house, see *Zohar* 1:49a (quoting the verse from Genesis 29); cf. *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥayyei Sarah* 2.

On the verse from Psalms in relation to the Dwelling, see *Shemot Rabbah* 52:1; *Zohar* 2:238a. The full verse in Exodus reads: *They brought the Dwelling to Moses, the Tent and all its furnishings, its clasps, its boards, its bars, and its posts and its sockets*. The full verse in Genesis describes how Laban brought his daughter Leah to Jacob: *When evening came, he took Leah his daughter and brought her to him, and he came to* [or: *came in to*] *her*. The verse in Numbers reads: *Moses came to* [or: *came into*] *the Tent of Testimony*.

277. ***Moses could not come into the Tent of Meeting…*** See Zohar 2:149a and the preceding note. The full verse in Exodus 39 reads: *Moses saw all the tasks, and, look, they had done it as YHVH had commanded, thus they had done it, and Moses blessed them*.

278. **the color violet appeared…** This color symbolizes *Shekhinah*, with whom all the higher *sefirot* unite. See above, notes 106, 189, 192.

The ציץ (*tsits*), *medallion* (or *plate, rosette*), was a gold plate worn on the forehead of the high priest over his turban, bearing the inscription קדש ליהוה (*qodesh la-YHVH*), *Holy to YHVH*. See above, p. 240, n. 404. Exodus 39:30–31 reads in full: *They made the medallion of the holy diadem of pure gold, and wrote upon it an inscription of seal-engravings: "Holy to YHVH." And they put on it a strand of violet, to put on the turban above, as YHVH had commanded Moses*.

The passage that follows here in the standard printed editions is from the *Tosefta*. It does not appear in N10, N41, V18, or the Cremona edition. All passages from the *Tosefta* will be translated in a subsequent volume.

279. **mystery of the supernal Holy Name…** The divine name יהוה (*YHVH*) is pronounced as אדני (*Adonai*), "my Lord," so the two names are closely linked. The latter signifies *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the Dwelling), who is אדון (*Adon*), *Lord of, all the earth*. She is also pictured as *ark of the covenant*—housing *Yesod*, the divine phallus, who is associated with the covenant of circumcision. The name *YHVH* signifies *Shekhinah*'s partner, *Tif'eret* (as well as the entire spectrum of *sefirot*).

On *Adonai* as the divine abode, see *Zohar* 3:21b; *ZḤ* 34a, 63b (*ShS*). On *Adonai* and *Adon*, cf. *Zohar* 1:33b–34a. On *Shekhinah* as *ark of the covenant*, see also above, p. 218, nn. 331–32; p. 221, n. 339. On the full sefirotic significance of *YHVH*, see above, pp. 229–30, n. 368.

280. **א (*Alef*) is י (*yod*) …** The initial letter of אדני (*Adonai*) corresponds to the initial letter of יהוה (*YHVH*). Rabbi Yitsḥak may be implying that the three letters of the full spelling יוד (*yod*) comprise the shape of the letter א (*alef*): the י (*yod*) forming the upper right of the א (*alef*), the ו (*vav*) forming the diagonal line in the middle, and the ד (*dalet*), turned upside down, resembling the bottom left.

281. **ד (*Dalet*) is mystery of ה (*he*)…** The second letter of אדני (*Adonai*) corresponds to the second letter of יהוה (*YHVH*). Rabbi Yitsḥak may be implying that *Binah* was originally ד

(*dalet*). Once Father *Ḥokhmah* joined with Her, She conceived a son, symbolized by ו (*vav*), and this *vav* constituted a new graphic element, or leg, transforming ד (*dalet*) into ה (*he*).

See *Zohar* 2:123b, 178b (*SdTs*). Elsewhere in the *Zohar*, this transformation pertains to *Shekhinah* rather than *Binah*. See *Zohar* 1:51a, 60a; 2:104a; 3:180b.

282. **נ (*Nun*) is mystery of the letter ו (*vav*)...** The third letter of אדני (*Adonai*) corresponds to the third letter of יהוה (*YHVH*), either because the shape of ו (*vav*) resembles the shape of ן (final *nun*), or because ו (*vav*) is the middle letter of the full spelling נון (*nun*). The letter נ (*nun*) symbolizes the female, *Shekhinah*, while the letter ו (*vav*) symbolizes the male, *Tif'eret*. Thus the full spelling נון (*nun*) signifies male and female as "one whole."

On the relation between ו (*vav*) and ן (final *nun*), see *Zohar* 3:66b, 285b; *ZḤ* 70a (*ShS*). On ו (*vav*) as the middle letter of the full spelling נון (*nun*), see *Zohar* 2:180b. Elsewhere, the *Zohar*, indicates that ן (final *nun*) symbolizes the union of male and female. See *Bahir* 56 (83); *Zohar* 1:18b–19a, 147a (*Tos*); 3:155a, 156b, 285b; *ZḤ* 70a (*ShS*). At the end of this paragraph, instead of "נון (*nun*)," V18 and Cremona read "ן (final *nun*)."

On נ (*nun*) as a symbol of *Shekhinah*, who is known as נוקבא (*nuqba*), "Female," see *Zohar* 1:147a–b (*Tos*); 2:91a, 139a, 215a; 3:66b, 155a; *ZḤ* 41c. On ו (*vav*) as symbolizing *Tif'eret*, the Divine Male, see above, note 132.

283. **ה (*He*) is mystery of the letter י (*yod*)...** The final letter of יהוה (*YHVH*) corresponds to the final letter of אדני (*Adonai*), both alluding to *Shekhinah*, who is symbolized by the feminine marker ה (*he*). She is also known as Small Wisdom, or Wisdom of Solomon, Daughter of *Ḥokhmah* (Wisdom). Since *Ḥokhmah*, being the primordial point, is often symbolized by י (*yod*), His Daughter, *Shekhinah*, inherits this symbol.

On *Shekhinah* as Small (or Lower) Wisdom, see *Zohar* 1:141b; 3:61a, 290a (*IZ*), 296a (*IZ*). On *Shekhinah* as Wisdom

of Solomon, see *Zohar* 1:150a, 223a, 238a, 248b; 3:74b, 160a, 176b, 297a.

284. **These letters combine with those…** The letters of יהוה (*YHVH*) and אדני (*Adonai*) combine. Apparently, Rabbi Yitsḥak is referring to the combined name יאהדונהי (*YAHDVNHY*), a focus of meditation.

285. **the Dwelling below…** The earthly Tabernacle corresponds to *Shekhinah* ("the higher Dwelling"), who in turn corresponds to Her Mother, *Binah* ("another Dwelling, highest of all"). *Shekhinah* "houses" the *sefirot* above Her, as does *Binah*. See below, note 287.

The full verse reads: *You shall make fifty golden clasps, and you shall join the curtains to one another with the clasps, and the Dwelling will be one*.

286. **it was erected by Moses…** Moses (symbolizing *Tif'eret*) had to erect the Dwelling himself because it symbolized *Shekhinah*, to whom he was wed.

See above, notes 266, 276. On Moses alone being able to erect the Dwelling, see *Shemot Rabbah* 52:4. The title מארי דביתא (*marei de-veita*), "master of the house," means here "husband of *Shekhinah*." See *Zohar* 1:21b, 138b, 152b, 236b, 239a; 2:22b, 99b, 133b, 134b, 238b, 244b (*Heikh*); 3:163b. Cf. Numbers 12:7: *Not so My servant Moses, in all My house he is trusted*. For the association of "house" with "wife," see M *Yoma* 1:1. On Moses as the husband of *Shekhinah*, see above, pp. 103–4, n. 128.

מטרוניתא (*Matronita*) is an aramaized form of Latin *matrona*, "matron, married woman, noble lady," and is often applied in the *Zohar* to *Shekhinah*, the divine wife.

287. **Once Moses erected the Dwelling below…** Once Moses did so, a heavenly Dwelling was also erected. This higher Dwelling is *Shekhinah* Herself, who was erected by *Binah* ("mystery of the upper world"), the highest Dwelling of all. (See above, note 285.) The closing phrase, "arrayed with him," can be understood as "arrayed with

Him," namely with *Tif'eret*, who is "mystery of Moses" and symbolized by him.

See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:12, in the name of Rabbi Simon: "When the blessed Holy One told Israel to erect the Dwelling, He hinted to the angels that they too should construct a Dwelling. When it was erected below, it was erected above; and that is the Dwelling of the Youth named Metatron, in which he offers up the souls of the righteous to atone for Israel in the days of their exile."

In the *Zohar*, the heavenly Dwelling is *Shekhinah* Herself, who is served by the chief angel Metatron. See *Tanḥuma, Naso* 18; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 5, 22b; *Zohar* 1:35a; 2:143a, 159a (standard edition), 164a, 169b, 238a–b, 239b–242b; 3:3b; Baḥya ben Asher on Exodus 40:17. On the various Dwellings, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:869–72. On Metatron, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:626–31; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 377–81. On Metatron as Youth, see 3 Enoch 4:10; BT *Yevamot* 16b; Vol. 4, p. 359, n. 563.

288. ***All the wise ones...*** These artisans symbolize the *sefirot* from *Ḥesed* through *Yesod* who convey the flow of emanation to *Shekhinah* ("the sea").

The full verse in Exodus reads: *All the wise ones who were doing all the holy work came, each one from the task that he was doing*.

289. ***Bezalel and Oholiab...*** Symbolizing, respectively, *Ḥesed* on the right and *Gevurah* on the left.

See above, notes 6, 29–30, 47. The full verse in Exodus reads: *Bezalel and Oholiab and every wise-hearted man in whom YHVH has given wisdom and understanding to know how to do the task of the holy work, shall do all that YHVH has commanded*.

290. **death was abolished...** With the completion of the Dwelling, death was not actually abolished but its power was weakened. Only when the Messiah appears will death (and its companion, the evil impulse) be totally abolished.

The eventual abolishment of the evil impulse and death may be linked with the verse quoted by Rabbi Yitsḥak (above at note 286): *First of nations, Amalek, and his end unto destruction* (Numbers 24:20), since Israel's archenemy, Amalek, can symbolize the demonic realm and the evil impulse.

On death and the evil impulse, see the statement attributed to Resh Lakish in BT *Bava Batra* 16a: "Satan, the evil impulse, and the Angel of Death are one and the same." On the relation between Samael and the evil serpent, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 13 and 21, where Samael is described as riding the serpent.

The full verse in Isaiah 25 reads: *He will swallow up death forever. My Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces and remove the disgrace of His people from the whole earth—for YHVH has spoken*.

291. **When Israel made the Calf…** Moses realized that the evil impulse had seduced Israel to worship the Golden Calf, so he removed *the Tent* from the camp to ensure that the holiness dwelling there would not be contaminated by the impurity of the evil impulse.

See above, pp. 100–101, nn. 120–21. Technically, the *Tent* mentioned in Exodus 33:7 is not the Dwelling, but rather a private tent where Moses could commune with God; it was also accessible to the individual Israelite worshiper.

292. **As long as the side of holiness rules…** Rome here represents medieval Christendom.

On the contrast between Jerusalem and Rome, see *Zohar* 2:238b. Cf. *Zohar* 2:220a, 240a, 241b. The reading "wicked Rome" or "Rome" is attested in various witnesses (including M5, N10, O2, O17, R1, *Or Yaqar*). In N41 and V18 the name of the city is crossed out. Mantua and Cremona offer a bland revision: מלכו אחרא (*malkhu aḥara*), "the other kingdom." Later printed editions read: חייבא צור (*tsor ḥayyava*), "wicked Tyre."

On Tyre as signifying Rome, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 7:11; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 17, 90a; *Tanḥuma, Va'era* 13; *Shemot Rabbah* 9:13. The connection between Tyre and Rome relates to the closing line here: "As long as Jerusalem is full, wicked Rome will be desolate," which recalls the Talmudic contrast between Caesarea or Edom (both representing the Roman empire) and Jerusalem: "If one is full, the other is desolate." This formula appears in BT *Pesaḥim* 42b and *Megillah* 6a, where it is based on Tyre's gloating words over the fall of Jerusalem: *I shall be filled, now that she is desolate* (Ezekiel 26:2). Cf. above, note 275.

293. ***She said to the servant…*** The context (Genesis 24:64–65) describes Rebekah's first encounter with her husband-to-be, Isaac: *Rebekah raised her eyes and saw Isaac, and she alighted from the camel. She said to the servant, "Who is that man walking through the field toward us?" The servant said, "He is my master," and she took her veil and covered herself.*

On wondering why certain verses appear in the Torah, see BT *Ḥullin* 60b, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Lakish, "Many verses seem fit to be burned, yet precisely these are essential components of Torah." See above, p. 241, n. 409.

294. **this verse constitutes a mystery…** Rebekah perceived the quality of harsh Judgment on the left, symbolized by Isaac, and the extreme demonic power produced by this quality, which is symbolized by the camel.

According to *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 13, the serpent in the Garden of Eden resembled a camel (with a long neck, before the serpent lost its legs), and Samael rode this creature. Here, this camel is apparently identified with Lilith, Samael's partner. See *Bereshit Rabbah* 19:1; *Bahir* 141 (200); *Zohar* 2:242b–244a; below, note 296. On the connection between the demonic power and death, see BT *Bava Batra* 16a, quoted above, note 290.

295. **This גמל (*gamal*), camel…** Rabbi El'azar associates גמל (*gamal*), "camel," with the root גמל (*gml*), "to requite, repay." The demonic camel eagerly requites and destroys the wicked.

See BT *Berakhot* 56b: "If one sees a camel in a dream, death has been decreed upon him from heaven and he has been delivered from it." The full verse in Proverbs reads: *He who is kind to the poor lends to YHVH, and his due He will repay him*.

296. **This side of impurity…** The demonic force is called "a camel" because it requites human sin with death. (See the preceding note.) This camel-serpent, ridden by Samael, seduced Adam and Eve.

On Samael riding the camel-serpent, see *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 13, 21; *Bahir* 141 (200); *Zohar* 1:35b, 55a, 64a, 137b, 145b–146a, 153a, 160b, 169b, 228a; 2:242b–244a.

297. **Adam drew him upon himself…** Adam attracted the demonic force, which then seduced him and Eve. The *strange woman* described in Proverbs 5 symbolizes the demonic seductress.

298. **when Rebekah saw…** She realized that she was to be married to Isaac, who signifies the aspect of *Din* (strict Judgment), symbolized by gold—whose byproduct, slag, represents demonic power and evil. Thus evil is the residue of the refining process of emanation—or that which derives from *Din* when this quality is not balanced by *Ḥesed* (Loving-kindness). On the alchemical symbolism, see Scholem, *Alchemy and Kabbalah*, 38–40.

299. **When Israel did that deed …** When the Israelites demanded that Aaron fashion an idol for them, why did it turn out to be a calf? After all, they said simply *Make us Elohim, gods, that will go before us*.

On Aaron's delaying tactics, see above, p. 84, n. 81; p. 91, n. 99; p. 93, n. 103. The full verse in Exodus reads: *The people saw that Moses lagged in coming down from the*

mountain, and the people assembled against Aaron and said to him, "Rise up, make us Elohim*, gods, that will go before us, for this man Moses who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him."*

300. **the deed was done fittingly...** The image of a calf derives from the left side, which is symbolized by gold and the color red. The dross of gold represents the demonic force and evil, which originate from harsh Judgment on the left. Demonic powers exhibit the reddish hue of gold, and both this precious element and these powers develop by the intensity of the sun. Appointed over the sun is a demonic force resembling a calf.

The relation between the Golden Calf and the left side derives from a rabbinic tradition. According to various sources, Israel worshiped the Golden Calf as an imitation of the bull on the left side of the Divine Chariot (as described by the prophet Ezekiel). See *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 21: "The blessed Holy One said to him [Moses], '...I see them coming to Sinai and receiving My Torah, and I descend on Sinai in My chariot of four animals, on which they gaze, and they unhitch one of them and thus arouse My anger'—as is said: *the face of* שור (*shor*), *a bull* [or: *an ox*], *on the left*... (Ezekiel 1:10), and it is written: *They exchanged their glory for the image of a bull* (Psalms 106:20)." See above, pp. 78–79, n. 65.

"Dross" renders the Zoharic neologism סוספיתא (*suspita*), apparently based on Aramaic כוספא (*kuspa*), "pomace, husk, residue." See above, note 72; cf. note 298.

On the sun generating gold, see *Zohar* 1:249b–250a. Cf. above, pp. 58–59, n. 6; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 95 (120). On heavenly influence on minerals, see Vol. 5, p. 501, n. 882; Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* 3:29.

301. **This impure spirit...** The female evil serpent is ridden by Samael, and this demonic couple is called by the plural pronoun אלה (*elleh*), "these," referring both to them

and to the many powers engendered by them who are present here in the world

The divine female (*Shekhinah*) and male (*Yesod*) are each called by the singular demonstrative pronoun *this*—in its Hebrew female and male forms, זאת (*zot*) and זה (*zeh*) respectively. *This* implies "constantly present right here." The singular form highlights the unity of the divine realm, as opposed to the multiplicity of the demonic forces (*these*).

Shekhinah is also known as Holy Spirit and "mystery of Covenant," the latter referring to the mark of circumcision. (Usually in the *Zohar* the covenant is associated with *Yesod*, the divine phallus, but here *Shekhinah* is linked with *Yesod* and shares the designation Covenant).

According to Rabbi El'azar, in the proclamation by the worshipers of the Golden Calf—*These are your gods, O Israel*—the word *these* alludes to the multiple demonic powers who participated in the idolatrous Golden Calf. He links this loaded word with the same word in the verse from Isaiah, which reads literally: *Can a woman forget her suckling, or feel no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these* [or: *she*] *may forget, yet I will not forget you*. In rabbinic literature, the phrase *these may forget* is understood to mean "the sin of the Golden Calf *will be forgotten*," based on the wording *These are your gods*. For Rabbi El'azar, *these* alludes both to the sin of idolatry and to the manifold demonic powers, all of which will eventually be eliminated from the world and *forgotten*.

The appearance of the same word, *these*, in the verse from Lamentations—*Over these I weep*—indicates that the sin of the Golden Calf caused much weeping. According to rabbinic tradition, all of Israel's subsequent suffering—including the destruction of the Temple and their exile—is partly a retribution for this sin. See BT *Sanhedrin* 102a.

Shekhinah, the Divine Presence, is also known as אנכי (*anokhi*), *I*, because through Her the Divine reveals itself, declaring "I am." See above, note 74.

On *Shekhinah* as זאת (*zot*), *this*, see *Zohar* 1:49b, 72a, 93b, 176b, 200b, 228a; 2:11b–12a, 37a–b, 39b, 50b–51a, 54b, 57a, 126b, 238b; 3:31a, 41a, 179b, 250a. On *Shekhinah* and *Yesod* as *zot* and זה (*zeh*), see *Zohar* 1:93b; 2:37b, 39b, 50b; 3:31a, 250a. *Zot*, *this*, and ברית (*berit*), *covenant*, often appear together, e.g., Genesis 17:10; Isaiah 59:21; Jeremiah 31:33.

On Samael riding the serpent, see above, note 296. On the plural *these* in Exodus 32:4, see above, p. 90, n. 97. On the link between *these* in Exodus and *these* in Isaiah, see BT *Berakhot* 32b; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 17:7; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 31, 146a. Cf. *Targum Yonatan* on Isaiah 49:15; *Zohar* 2:221a.

The full verse in Exodus 32 reads: *He took from their hand, and he fashioned it with a graving tool* [or: *and he fashioned it in a mold*, or: *and he wrapped it in a bag*], *and made it into a molten calf. And they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!"* See above, p. 85, n. 83. This passage (extending to p. 366 at n. 306) appears with slight variation in *Zohar* 1:228a.

302. **Alternatively, *Over these I weep…*** The demonic realm (indicated by *these*) has been empowered by Israel's sins, so *Shekhinah*—the Holy Spirit, also known as אני (*ani*), *I*—weeps.

On *Shekhinah* as אני (*ani*), *I*, see *Zohar* 1:6a–b, 65b, 204b; 3:178b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 380 (and Wolfson's notes 8–9). Cf. Vol. 4, p. 264, n. 231. On *Shekhinah* as אנכי (*anokhi*), *I*, see the preceding note.

303. ***Elleh, These, are the words of the covenant…*** How can the word *these* imply the demonic powers if this verse links *these* with *the words of the covenant?* Rabbi El'azar—probably playing on אֵלֶּה (*elleh*), *these*, and אָלָה (*alah*), "curse"—explains that the fulfillment of the covenant is based on a threat of punishment and a set of curses, associated with the demonic realm. These curses, which are spelled out in the preceding verses in Deuteronomy (28:15–

68), derive from the primordial serpent, who was cursed after seducing Eve to sin.

See Genesis 3:14: *Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all beasts of the field. Upon your belly shall you go and dust shall you eat all the days of your life*.

304. ***Elleh, These, are the commandments…*** Similarly, how can the word *these* imply the demonic forces if there is a verse linking *these* with *the commandments*? The answer is that this verse implies a contrast between the two: each commandment is intended to refine the human being and help him avoid the path of evil.

305. ***Elleh, These, are the offspring of Noah…*** How can the word *these* be associated with a righteous hero such as Noah? Because Noah's son Ham *saw his father's nakedness* (Genesis 9:22), and for this Ham's son Canaan was cursed. On the demonic nature of Canaan, see *Zohar* 1:73a.

306. **smelted dross of gold…** Gold symbolizes the *sefirah* of *Gevurah* or *Din* (strict Judgment) on the left side; the dross of gold symbolizes evil, a residue of the refining process of emanation. This demonic dross characterized the Golden Calf. Although Aaron symbolizes *Ḥesed* on the right side, he is also linked with *Din* on the left, symbolized by his tribe, Levi. *Din* is also symbolized by fire as well as gold, which were both combined in the making of the Calf, as indicated by Aaron's explanation to Moses in Exodus 32:24: *I said to them, "Whoever has gold, take it off." They gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf*.

At Sinai, the people of Israel were cleansed of the impurity injected into the world by the primordial serpent in the Garden of Eden, and they could have become immortal. (On mortality as the consequence of eating from the Tree of Knowledge, see Genesis 2:17; 3:3, 19.) But when they sinned by worshiping the Golden Calf, the

serpent regained his power over them, condemning them to mortality.

See BT *Shabbat* 145b–146a, in the name of Rav Yosef: "When the serpent copulated with Eve, he injected her with זוהמא (*zohama*), filth [or: slime, lust]. Israel, who stood at Mount Sinai—their *zohama* ceased. Star-worshipers, who did not stand at Mount Sinai—their *zohama* did not cease." See above, note 196.

See BT *Avodah Zarah* 5a, in the name of Rabbi Yose: "Israel accepted the Torah only so that the Angel of Death would have no dominion over them, as is said: '*I Myself said, "You are gods, children of the Most High, all of you."* Now that you have acted corruptly [by worshiping the Golden Calf], *but* כאדם (*ke-adam*), *like humans* [or: *like Adam*], *you shall die*.'"

See *Mekhilta, Baḥodesh* 9; *Zohar* 1:52b, 63b, 126b, 131b; 2:193b; 3:162a. Cf. *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shelaḥ*, add. 1, see above, p. 99, n. 118.

On dross of gold, see above, note 300. On the link between fire and gold, see *Zohar* 2:24a; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 94–95 (120–21). On the desert as the abode of demonic powers, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Deuteronomy 32:10; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 17:7; *Zohar* 1:14b, 126a, 169b, 178b; 2:21a (*MhN*), 60a, 157a, 184a; 3:63b.

307. **afterward Aaron purified himself...** Since he had been defiled by the making of the Golden Calf, Aaron needed to be purified during the seven days of consecration (described in Exodus 29 and Leviticus 8). Fittingly, immediately following these seven days, Aaron was instructed to bring a calf as a purification offering (Leviticus 9:2), to atone, as it were, for the sin of the Calf.

Although Aaron did not really intend to fashion the Calf, he was partly responsible. Aaron symbolizes *Ḥesed* on the right, which empowers *Din* (symbolized by gold) and *Tif'eret* (symbolized by the sun). The impure spirit descended and

blended into the gold of the Calf, defiling both Israel and Aaron.

On the link between Aaron's purification offering and the sin of the Golden Calf, see *Sifra, Shemini, millu'im* 3, 43c; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 4, 10; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemini* 6; *Midrash Aggadah*, Leviticus 9:2; Rashi on Leviticus 9:2; *Zohar* 2:219b; 3:37a–38a. Cf. Ibn Ezra (long and short) on Exodus 32:1; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 9:2. On the connection between gold and the sun, see above, note 300.

308. **Why was he defiled?...** As mentioned previously, the image of the Golden Calf was actually linked with the bull on the left side of the Divine Chariot seen by the prophet Ezekiel. (See above, note 300.) Aaron symbolizes *Ḥesed* on the right, but he includes the left, and thus the Calf "emerged by him." Consequently, he was later given a calf to bring as a purification offering.

On Aaron combining both right and left, see above, notes 306–7. On the context in Ezekiel, see above, pp. 204–5, n. 287.

309. **this impure spirit was empowered...** Through the sin of the Golden Calf, the impure spirit was strengthened. Although they had just been purified by experiencing and accepting the revelation at Mount Sinai, now Israel became infected once again with the evil impulse. Following the seven days of priestly consecration, when Aaron was instructed to offer a calf, the people of Israel were commanded to purge themselves by offering a goat, which is the designated share of the demonic forces, or the evil impulse.

On the goat offered by Israel following the priestly consecration, see Leviticus 9:3; *Sifra, Shemini, millu'im* 3, 43c; *Tanḥuma, Shemini* 4, 10; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemini* 6; Naḥmanides on Leviticus 9:2; *Zohar* 3:38a–b; above, note 307. On the goat offered on Yom Kippur as the designated share of Azazel, or the Other Side, see above, pp. 16–17, n. 44; pp. 37–38, n. 97.

On the elimination of the evil impulse at Sinai, see above, p. 29, n. 74. On the equivalence of the evil impulse with the demonic forces, see BT *Bava Batra* 16a (in the name of Resh Lakish): "Satan, the evil impulse, and the Angel of Death are one and the same."

310. ***They exchanged their glory…*** The Golden Calf was based on the *bull* that appeared on the left side of the Divine Chariot. Aaron, who symbolizes *Ḥesed* on the right, absorbed *Din* on the left, and through him emerged the Golden Calf.

See above, notes 300, 306–8; pp. 77–79, nn. 64–65. The full verse in Psalms reads: *They exchanged their glory for the image of a bull eating grass*.

311. ***They exchanged their glory—Shekhinah…*** By worshiping the Golden Calf, the Israelites exchanged *Shekhinah* (the Divine Glory) for an idolatrous *image of a bull*. Consequently, the demonic filth associated with idolatry contaminated the world. See above, pp. 77–78, n. 64.

312. ***He made it into a molten calf…*** According to this verse, Aaron himself fashioned the Calf, whereas later in the same chapter Aaron claims that he simply *threw it into the fire and out came this calf*. Rabbi El'azar explains that since the impure spirit was empowered by Aaron, who strengthened the left side, it is as if *he made it into a molten calf*.

See above, notes 307–8, 310; pp. 87–88, nn. 89–90; p. 90, n. 95. For the full text of Exodus 32:4, see above, note 301. Exodus 32:24, recording Aaron's excuse to Moses, reads in full: *I said to them, "Whoever has gold, take* [or: *tear*] *it off!" They gave it to me and I threw it into the fire and out came this calf*.

313. **One person practices sorcery…** A sorcerer succeeds only if he is "qualified," namely if he is blemished, thereby matching the blemished nature of the demonic force that he seeks to contact. For example, Balaam was

blind in one eye (which was permanently *closed*), while his other eye gazed askance.

The verse in Numbers reads: *Utterance of Balaam son of Beor, utterance of the man* שתום העין (*shetum ha-ayin*). The original meaning of *shetum ha-ayin* may be either *whose eye is closed* or *whose eye is open*. Here Rabbi El'azar equates *shetum* with סתום (*setum*), "closed." The clause "all is one" may mean that *shetum ha-ayin* is equivalent to *setum ha-ayin, whose eye is closed*, or that Balaam's eyes were both blemished, one being permanently closed and the other gazing askance.

See BT *Sanhedrin* 105a, and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *shetum ha-ayin*; *Zohar* 1:68b; 2:69a; 3:63b, 147b; Milgrom, *Numbers*, on the verse. On Samael being cross-eyed, see *ZḤ* 31d; cf. *TZ* 70, 126b.

314. **איש עתי (*ish itti*), *a timely man*...** The person who is designated on Yom Kippur to lead the scapegoat off to the desert. The exact meaning of this phrase is uncertain, but Rabbi El'azar understands it as a *man prepared* for this task, meaning that his vision must be blemished, matching the blemished quality of the demonic force.

See *Zohar* 3:63b, 90a (*RM*). The verse in Leviticus 21 excludes blemished priests from offering a sacrifice. The full verse in Leviticus 16 reads: *Aaron shall lay his two hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the iniquities of the Children of Israel and all their transgressions, including all their sins, and he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it off in the hand of* איש עתי (*ish itti*), *a timely man, to the desert*. The phrase *ish itti* signifies "a man chosen to serve for this time and task," and can be rendered variously: *a man for the hour*; *a man for the occasion*; *a designated man*; *an appointed man*.

315. **Here, all was arranged ...** At the incident of the Golden Calf, the demonic spirit was able to dominate. The place was appropriate since the desert is its natural abode; gold pertains to the left side, the origin of demonic forces;

and Aaron, symbolizing *Ḥesed* on the right, empowered the forces of the left. Thus, the Calf was able to emerge.

See above, notes 306–8, 310. The verse in Deuteronomy 8 describes God's miraculous protection of Israel: *Who leads you through the great and terrible desert—fiery serpents and scorpions, and thirst, where there is no water—Who brings water out for you from flinty rock*.

316. ***a great sin…*** Referring to the primordial serpent, who seduces humanity to sin. Cf. *Zohar* 1:5a; 2:147b (*ST*).

The context in Exodus (32:31–32) reads: *Moses returned to YHVH and said, "Please, this people has committed a great sin, they made themselves gods of gold. Now, if You would only bear their sin! And if not, wipe me out, please, from Your book that You have written!"*

317. **When Aaron wished to be purified…** At the conclusion of the priestly consecration, Aaron sacrificed a calf (associated with the left side) to atone, as it were, for his part in the sin of the Golden Calf, thereby subduing the demonic forces. See above, note 307.

318. **In Egypt…** As the Israelites prepared to leave Egypt, they offered the Passover sacrifice, which consisted of a lamb—an animal sacred to the Egyptians. By sacrificing this animal, the Israelites subdued the demonic forces associated with Egypt. Similarly, the ashes of a *perfect red cow*—which purify those who have been defiled by contacting a corpse—subdue the impure forces.

On the Egyptian attitude toward certain animals, see Genesis 46:34; Exodus 8:22. On the significance of Israel's sacrificing an animal worshiped by the Egyptians, see *Zohar* 2:18a (*MhN*), 41b (*Piq*); 3:251a–b.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *Do not eat of it raw, nor in any way cooked in water, but fire-roasted, its head with its shanks and with its entrails*. The full verse in Numbers reads: *This is the statute of the teaching that YHVH has commanded, saying, "Speak to the Children of Israel, that*

they take you a perfect red cow that has no blemish and on which no yoke has been put.”

319. **So why?** Why is a “holy and pure” cow burned?

320. **So it is…** Rabbi El’azar explains that the cow signifies Israel, but its description as *a perfect red cow that has no blemish* alludes to the four kingdoms under whom Israel has suffered in exile. According to midrashic interpretations of this verse, *red* alludes to Babylon, whose king (Nebuchadnezzar) had a dream of a huge statue with a *head of gold* (which has a reddish hue). This image was interpreted by Daniel as referring to Nebuchadnezzar himself: *You are the head of gold*.

The description of the cow as *perfect* alludes to Media (Persia), whose only major fault was idolatry (which they inherited from their ancestors), and whose king (Cyrus) defeated Babylon and then allowed the Judean exiles to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple. *That has no blemish* alludes to Greece, whose ruler Alexander the Great blessed God. *On which no yoke has been put* alludes to Edom (Rome), who rejected the yoke of the Blessed Holy One.

Rabbi El’azar obviously borrows from these midrashic interpretations, but his description of the kingdom of Greece as being “near the paths of faith” also represents a new element. This matches a statement in *ZḤ* 38a, which describes Greece as being “closer to the path of faith than any other kingdom.” See Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 62–63, which indicates that before Aristotle, Greek sages were “close to the path of truth.” These various statements seem to imply a correlation between elements of Kabbalah and Neoplatonic writings, which circulated in the Middle Ages under an ancient guise.

For a different interpretation, see Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 138–39, n. 159. He contends that the *Zohar* is alluding here to the Greek Orthodox Church, which was more mystically inclined than the Western Church and

emphasized the role of Mary (similar in some ways to the role of *Shekhinah*).

See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:117, n. 369; Scholem. Cf. *Zohar* 1:13a (Vol. 1, pp. 92–93, n. 699). For the full verse in Numbers, see above, note 318. On the verse in Numbers as alluding to Israel and the four kingdoms, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:9–10; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 14, 65a–b; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥuqqat* 27–28.

321. **Although these verses…** Although the passage describing the red cow can be interpreted variously, the essential point is that *pure* issues *from impure*. The cow's qualities (*perfect, red, that has no blemish, on which no yoke has been put*) signify the impure kingdoms who have dominated Israel; but once the cow has been sacrificed, burned, and turned into ashes, those very ashes become a means of purification.

The verse in Job reads: *Who can produce pure from impure? No one!* A midrashic reading transforms the conclusion into a rhetorical question: *Is it not the One?* On this midrashic reading in relation to the red cow, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 4:1; *Tanḥuma, Ḥuqqaty, Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ḥuqqat* 4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 19:1. Cf. *Zohar* 1:102b; 2:69b; 3:48b, 180b.

In the last sentence, "ashes" renders עפר (*afar*), literally "dust." The term afar appears once in this biblical passage (Numbers 19:17), while the term אפר (*efer*), *ashes*, appears twice (Numbers 19:9–10). The two terms are conjoined in Genesis 18:27 and Job 42:6: עפר ואפר (*afar va-efer*), *dust and ashes*. On these terms (and the whole passage), see Finkelstein, "Shevilei Halakhah be-Torat ha-Sod."

322. **all those occupied with it become impure…** Those involved in burning the cow and gathering up its ashes are rendered impure, yet once water is poured over the ashes, these can purify the impure. The verse from Malachi indicates the initial negative quality of *ashes*.

According to Numbers 19:17, *They shall take for the impure person from the dust* [or: *ashes*] *of the burning of the purification offering and fresh water shall be put upon it in a vessel*. This seems to imply that the water was added to the ashes. However, according to rabbinic tradition, the ashes were added to the water. See *Sifrei*, Numbers 128. According to *Tosefta Parah* 6:3, Rabbi Shim'on permits adding the water to the ashes, a view that is accepted (anonymously) in *Sifrei*. The wording here—"water is poured over these ashes"—may reflect the biblical wording or could reflect the lenient view of Rabbi Shim'on (the father of the speaker, Rabbi El'azar). See Scholem; Finkelstein, "Shevilei Halakhah be-Torat ha-Sod," 238–40.

323. ***waters of* חטאת (*ḥattat*), *expiation*...** The word *ḥattat* means both "sin" and "that which removes the effect of sin, expiation, purification." According to Rabbi El'azar, the red cow's ashes mixed with water are called *waters of ḥattat* to indicate that initially the cow conveys impurity (or sinfulness). Therefore, it is taken *outside the camp* and is handled not by the high priest but by the prefect (who attended the high priest).

The verse in Numbers 19 reads in full: *You shall give it to Eleazar the priest, and he shall take it outside the camp and it shall be slaugh*tered before him. Based on the fact that Eleazar is specified here, rather than his father, Aaron the high priest, rabbinic tradition concludes that the red cow should be handled by the prefect rather than by the high priest himself. See *Sifrei*, Numbers 123.

324. **This is *pure from impure*...** Whereas the red cow initially conveyed impurity, now its ashes mixed with water become a means of purification, forcing the impure spirit to flee.

325. ***Waters of ḥattat, sin*...** Just as *ḥattat* can mean both "sin" and "expiation, purification," so נדה (*niddah*) can mean both "defilement, impurity" and "lustration." Once the red cow has been sacrificed and burned, and its ashes mixed

with water, its initial impurity is vanquished and the Holy Spirit prevails. See *Zohar* 3:180b–181a.

Numbers 19:9 reads in full: *A pure man shall gather the cow's ashes and set them outside the camp in a pure place, and it shall be for the community of the Children of Israel in safekeeping as waters of* נדה (*niddah*), *lustration; it is* חטאת (*ḥattat*), *a purification* [or: *expiation*] *offering*.

326. **kissed him** Kissed Rabbi El'azar.

327. **To this realm, which is impure spirit…** To a certain extent, the demonic force prevails. The best strategy is to provide him with a small portion within ritual activity, thereby assuaging and limiting him. On this strategy, see above, pp. 16–17, n. 44; pp. 37–38, n. 97.

328. **In mystery of tefillin…** Inside the leather boxes of the tefillin, around the parchments containing the biblical passages, one should wind a calf's hair, and according to Rabbi Shim'on, this hair should stick outside the box visibly. The calf is associated with the left side, the source of demonic forces, and the protruding calf's hair represents a portion intended for the impure spirit, ensuring that he will "not denounce us in our holiness."

On the origins, development, and details of this custom, see BT *Shabbat* 28b, 108a; *Shimmusha Rabba*, in *Halakhot Gedolot*, ed. Hilde-sheimer, 1:490; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Tefillin* 3:8; Moses de León, *Ha-Nefesh ha-Ḥakhamah*, F3d; Joseph Caro, *Beit Yosef, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 32:44; *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 32:44; *Magen Avraham, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 32:61; David Luria, *Ma'amar Qadmut Sefer ha-Zohar*, 48–49; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Scholem; Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigleh she-ba-Nistar*, 67–68. On the association of the calf with the left side, see above, notes 300, 306–8.

329. **So did Israel act…** In the original ritual of Yom Kippur (Leviticus 16:7–10), one goat is sacrificed as a purification offering to God, while a scapegoat bearing the sins of Israel is sent off into the desert for the demon

Azazel. According to *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 46, the scapegoat of Yom Kippur is intended to preoccupy Satan: "They gave him a bribe on Yom Kippur so that he would not nullify Israel's sacrifice." Here, Rabbi Shim'on indicates that the scapegoat assuages the Other Side, ensuring that he will not accuse Israel.

See above, pp. 37–38, n. 97. "Ravaging bands" renders חבילין (*ḥavilin*), which derives from חבל (*ḥevel*), "band, group," and/or the root חבל (*ḥvl*), "to injure, destroy."

330. **Rabbi Abba's eyes were flowing…** He weeps from being overwhelmed by Rabbi Shim'on's teaching. Rabbi Shim'on then addresses him by his name, *Abba* (Father), and says, טנפיר טיקורך ואקפוד בקולטך (*tanpir tiqqurakh ve-iqpod be-qultakh*). This bizarre, neologistic declaration defies translation; I have ventured a conjectural rendering. The first word is simply unknown; the second may be a metathesis of קיטורך (*qitturakh*), based on the root קטר (*qtr*), "to tie." The third word can mean "to mind, care for," while the final word is based on the root קלט (*qlt*), "to absorb."

Rabbi Shim'on may be telling his disciple to overcome his confusion and absorb the secrets carefully. For various interpretations, see *Derekh Emet*; *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Nefesh David*; Soncino; *Sullam*; Scholem; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On the verse from Psalms, see above at notes 256–57.

331. **On the day of Rosh Hashanah…** On this day, *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the heavenly Court) judges the world. The Other Side stands ready to punish all those who are guilty, but Israel sounds the shofar, confounding him totally. There is still opportunity to turn back to God in repentance, but those who do not are eventually condemned, and on *Hosha'na Rabbah* (the seventh day of *Sukkot*) divine decrees for the coming year issue from above.

On confounding Satan, see BT *Rosh ha-Shanah* 16a–b: "Why do we sound a plain blast and a tremolo blast while sitting and then again while standing? In order to confound Satan." See above, p. 35, n. 88. The idea that divine decrees

are finalized on *Hosha'na Rabbah* derives from medieval sources. See Vol. 5, p. 304, n. 318.

332. **All of Israel should beware…** Of the demonic Accuser. At each new moon, a goat is offered to him, so that he will be satisfied with this share and not interfere in the joyous renewal of the moon, which symbolizes the renewal of *Shekhinah* and Her union with *Tif'eret*.

According to Numbers 28:15, on each new moon a goat must be brought as a purification offering. In the *Zohar*, this goat is intended to preoccupy Satan. See *Zohar* 1:64a, 65a, 122b, 138b; 2:33a, 185a, 269a; 3:248a–b; above, notes 327, 329. Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah* 6:3; BT *Ḥullin* 60b (quoted above, p. 255, n. 450). The sixteenth-century kabbalists of Safed observed the day preceding the new moon as *Yom Kippur Qatan* (Minor Day of Atonement).

The phrase "the joyous renewal" renders a word that appears in various manuscripts as either חדוותא (*ḥedveta*), "joy," or חדתותא (*ḥadttuta*), "renewal."

333. **When it is renewed…** When *Shekhinah*, symbolized by the moon, is renewed each month, She is called נער (*na'ar*), "youth," whereas the Other Side is called *an old and foolish king*. God has offered Israel advice on how to assuage this ancient threatening power by providing it a share in holiness.

The title *na'ar*, "youth," is often applied to Metatron; *Shekhinah*, who is closely related to (and sometimes identified with) Metatron, sometimes shares this designation.

On Metatron as *na'ar*, see 3 Enoch 4:10; BT *Yevamot* 16b; *Tosafot*, ad loc., s.v. *pasuq zeh*; Vol. 5, p. 350, n. 453. On *Shekhinah* as *na'ar*, see *Zohar* 1:51a; 2:38b; 3:156b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 115; cf. *Zohar* 1:179b. On the identification of Metatron with *Shekhinah*, see Vol. 3, p. 87, n. 9.

On Satan (or the evil impulse) as *an old and foolish king*, see *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 16; *Qohelet Rabbah* on

4:13; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:5; *Zohar* 1:78a–b (*ST*), 110b (*MhN*), 179a–b; 2:33b, 181a.

334. ***Above the expanse over their heads…*** This verse in Ezekiel, describing what lies above the angelic *ḥayyot* (*living beings*), reads in full: *Above the expanse* [or: *firmament*] *over their heads—like the appearance of sapphire, image of a throne. And upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of a human being upon it, above*. Rabbi Shim'on explains that the angelic *living beings* are stimulated by a rush of air, or spirit, from *Shekhinah*, who is known as *the living being* (in the singular). As they ascend, they do not gaze at the divine figure on the Throne.

The verse quoted from Ezekiel 1:19 is actually a conflation of Ezekiel 1:19–20. The context (1:19–21) reads in full: *When the living beings moved,* האופנים (*ha-ofanim*), *the wheels, moved beside them; and when the living beings rose off the ground, the wheels rose too. Wherever the spirit would go they went—wherever the spirit would go—and the wheels rose alongside them, for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels. When these moved those moved, and when these halted those halted, and when these rose off the ground the wheels rose alongside them—for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels*.

In verses 20–21 the noun חיה (*ḥayyah*), *living being* (or "animal, creature"), appears in the singular, apparently to emphasize the unity of the ensemble of four living beings. See Greenberg, *Ezekiel*, 48. On *Shekhinah* as *ḥayyah*, see Ezra of Gerona, *Peirush le-Shir ha-Shirim*, 508–9; *Zohar* 1:12b, 16a, 21a, 34b, 46b–47a, 211a, 242a; 2:48b, 126a, 242a; 3:39b, 41a; *ZḤ* 9b (*MhN*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 51; idem, Commentary on the Ten *Sefirot*, 338b.

The full verse in Exodus reads: *They brought the Dwelling to Moses, the Tent and all its furnishings, its clasps, its boards, its bars, and its posts and its sockets*.

335. **Why do they ascend?...** The angelic *living beings* ascend to raise *Shekhinah* (*the living being*) to unite with *Tif'eret* (who is represented by the human figure on the Throne). The four *living beings* are pictured as angelic maidens, or virgins, accompanying *Shekhinah* (who is Herself pictured as the Throne). She is also symbolized by Noah's ark, which was lifted by the waters.

The verse *They brought the Dwelling to Moses* now implies that *the living beings* brought *Shekhinah* to *Tif'eret* (who is symbolized by Moses). On the one hand, *Shekhinah*'s angelic companions escort, or bring, Her to *Tif'eret*; from another perspective, they themselves *are brought* along with Her.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *The Flood was forty days over the earth, and the waters increased and lifted the ark and it rose above the earth*. Cf. *Zohar* 1:68b.

336. ***To Moses...*** Moses symbolizes *Tif'eret* (the core of the *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* through *Yesod*), who is pictured as *the appearance of* אדם (*adam*), *a human being*, on the chariot-throne.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *YHVH said, "My spirit* [or: *breath*] *shall not abide in the human forever,* בשגם הוא בשר (*be-shaggam hu basar*), *for he is but flesh* [or: *for he too is flesh*]. *Let his days be a hundred and twenty years."* The word בשגם (*be-shaggam*), *for... but* [or: *for... too*], alludes to Moses, because this word shares two letters with, and is numerically equivalent to, משה (*Mosheh*), "Moses." (Moreover, the continuation of the verse—*Let his days be a hundred and twenty years*—matches Moses' lifespan.) Since *be-shaggam* implies Moses, the earlier word in the verse—באדם (*ba-adam*), *in the human*—also refers to Moses.

On *be-shaggam* as signifying Moses (who lived *a hundred and twenty years*), see *Bereshit Rabbah* 26:6; BT *Ḥullin* 139b; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 32; *Zohar* 1:37b–38a; 2:179a (*SdTs*). For the full verse in Ezekiel, see above, note 334.

337. **these four living beings…** These four angels and all of their camps constitute the angelic body of *Shekhinah* (who can be pictured as the soul of this body). They escort Her to Her union with *Tif'eret*. On the bride being brought to the groom, after which he always comes to her, see above, note 276.

"Members" renders שייפין (*shaifin*). Deriving from a root meaning "to smooth, rub, slip," שייפא (*shaifa*) signifies "limb" in the *Zohar*, perhaps based on the Talmudic expression (BT *Sotah* 7b) על איבריה לשפא (*al eivreih le-shafa*), "each limb entered its socket"—"slipping" into place—or "… entered the casket." See *Arukh*, s.v. *shaf*; Rashi, ad loc., and on Job 33:21, citing *Ḥullin* 42b; *Zohar* 3:170a; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 227.

338. **all those who bind unification…** Those who pray with devotion, intending to unify the *sefirot*. They help the angelic *living beings* raise *Shekhinah* (symbolized by the Throne) to *Tif'eret* (symbolized by Moses), and the union of the divine couple yields blessings for the righteous devotees on earth.

339. ***Moses saw all the work…*** Namely, *the holy work* of unifying the *sefirot*. The wording *Moses blessed them* implies that he secured blessings for those who stimulated the divine union. Moses himself, dwelling in *Tif'eret*, arranged everything properly and consummated the union.

The full verse in Exodus 39 reads: *Moses saw all the work, and, look, they had done it as YHVH had commanded, thus they had done it, and Moses blessed them*. The full verse in Exodus 36 reads: *All the wise ones who were doing all the holy work came, each one from the task that he was doing*.

340. **for he is master of the house…** Moses is husband of *Shekhinah* (who is Herself symbolized by the Dwelling), so only he is allowed to gaze upon Her. The artisans who brought the Dwelling to Moses brought all its

components, pictured here as bodily members (or “limbs”), representing the angelic limbs of *Shekhinah*.

The passive voice of the closing quotation, *The Dwelling was erected*, may imply that each component fit into place effortlessly. See *Tanḥuma, Pequdei* 11; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Pequdei* 8; *Shemot Rabbah* 52:4; above, note 36. Or, it may refer to *Shekhinah* being erected by *Binah*. See above, note 287.

On Moses as “master of the house” and husband of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 286; pp. 103–4, n. 128. On Moses’ unique capacity to gaze, see BT *Yevamot* 49b: “All the prophets gazed through an opaque glass, whereas Moses our teacher gazed through a translucent glass.” See above, p. 100, n. 119.

On Moses alone being able to erect the Dwelling, see above, notes 266, 286. On the angelic limbs of Shekhinah, see above, note 337. The full verse in Exodus 39 reads: *They brought the Dwelling to Moses, the Tent and all its furnishings, its clasps, its boards, its bars, and its posts and its sockets*.

341. **when Moses began to erect the Dwelling…** As the various components of the Dwelling (symbolizing *Shekhinah* and Her angelic body) were assembled, the demonic Other Side weakened. On the opposing pair, Jerusalem and Rome, see above, note 292.

342. **to be strengthened by mystery above…** By the power of *Tif'eret*, symbolized by Moses, not by any lesser humans. *Tif'eret* is known as אספקלריא דנהרא (*ispaqlarya de-nahara*), "the speculum [or: glass, mirror, lens] that shines," and Moses is associated with this resplendent speculum.

See BT *Yevamot* 49b: "All the prophets gazed through an opaque glass [literally: an *ispaqlarya* that does not shine], whereas Moses our teacher gazed through a translucent glass [literally: an *ispaqlarya* that shines]." See above, p. 100, n. 119.

Shekhinah, symbolized by the Dwelling, is also pictured as the moon, which is illumined by the sun (symbolizing *Tif'eret*). On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 10, n. 25.

343. ***He opened…*** Rabbi Shim'on is the speaker. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *Command Aaron and his sons, saying, "This is the teaching of* העולה (*ha-olah*), *the ascent offering. It is the very ascent offering* [or: *It is that which ascends*] *upon its hearth on the altar all night till morning, and the fire of the altar shall keep burning on it."* The ascent offering was totally consumed by fire.

Because of the context in Leviticus, the following passages (extending to p. 387 at n. 364) appear with slight variation in *Zohar* 3:26a–27a (in Mantua and the standard printed editions but not in Cremona).

344. ***Human and beast You deliver…*** Soon Rabbi Shim'on explains this verse. By the *ascent offering*, *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) ascends and unites with *Tif'eret*, and both are drawn to the Divine Mother, *Binah* (known as the World that is Coming). *Shekhinah* Herself is

called *ascent offering*, and since She rises to *Binah*, who is called Holy of Holies, She is known by this latter title too.

The phrase "*ascent offering*, קדש קדשים (*qodesh qodashim*), Holy of Holies" plays upon the rabbis' classification of the ascent offering as one of the קדשי קדשים (*qodshei qodashim*), "holies of holies," i.e., offerings of greatest holiness. See M *Zevaḥim* 5:4. Cf. the use of the term *qodesh qodashim* in Leviticus 2:3, 10; 6:10, 18, 22; 7:1, 6; and see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:182–83.

The full verse in Psalms reads: *Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains; Your judgments, the great abyss; human and beast You deliver, O YHVH*.

345. ***This is the Torah of the ascent offering…*** The verse reads: זאת תורת (*Zot torat*), *This is the teaching* [or: *the Torah*] *of, the ascent offering*. According to Rabbi Shim'on, the phrase *zot torat, This is the Torah of*, alludes to the female *Shekhinah* (who is known as *zot, this*) and the male *Tif'eret* (who is symbolized by Torah). Actually, the symbol of Torah includes both members of this divine couple: He is Written Torah, and She is Oral Torah—the latter revealing and expanding the former. On *Shekhinah* as *zot, this*, see above, note 301.

346. **its slaughtering is on the north side…** The ascent offering was slaughtered on the north side of the altar. This direction is associated with *Gevurah* (the divine left hand), which stimulates *Shekhinah* (symbolized by Oral Torah); then She is embraced by *Ḥesed* (the right hand) and unites with *Tif'eret* (the center). Finally, the divine couple is illumined by *Binah* (Holy of Holies). The entire process depends on human worship below: the service of the priests, the singing of the Levites, and the prayer of Israel—who correspond respectively to *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*.

Here the term אדם (*adam*), *human*, refers both to the earthly worshipers and to their divine counterparts. The *sefirot* are often depicted in the form of Primordial Adam. Technically, *adam* refers to the configuration of *sefirot* from

Ḥokhmah through *Yesod*, whose core is *Tif'eret* (or *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*).

On the ascent offering being slaughtered on the north side of the altar, see Leviticus 1:11; M *Zevaḥim* 5:4; *Zohar* 3:11a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 263. The full verse in Song of Songs reads: *His left hand beneath my head, his right embracing me*.

347. **in mystery of supernal spirit ...** *Shekhinah* is known as Holy Spirit. *Tif'eret*, in the center between *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, is an inner spirit, issuing from *Ḥokhmah* (*wisdom*) and *Binah* (*understanding*). Since *Shekhinah* also derives from this supernal sefirotic couple, She shares with *Tif'eret* the title *spirit of wisdom and understanding*. However, the spirit of *Tif'eret* issues directly from *Binah* (who is pictured as a shofar). Fire and water symbolize respectively *Gevurah* and *Ḥesed*, which are comprised in *Tif'eret*. *Binah* Herself is "supernal spirit, sealed in silence," who engenders and illumines all the lower *sefirot*. The ascent offering turning into rising smoke symbolizes the return of the spirit of *Shekhinah* to the ultimate spirit of *Binah*.

348. **Afterward, from mystery of *beast*...** The forces below *Shekhinah*, including beastly demonic forces, are nourished by physical elements of the ascent offering. Specifically, the fatty portions are provided to the demonic spirit, which is thereby assuaged and "bound" within its domain, so that it does not interfere with the holy function of the ascent offering.

The term *beast* is from the verse in Psalms, quoted by Rabbi Shim'on above (at note 344): *Human and beast You deliver, O YHVH*. On the theme of assuaging demonic forces, see above, pp. 16–17, n. 44; pp. 37–38, n. 97. On the ascent offering as Holy of Holies, see above, note 344. On the question of whether the demonic force has any share in the ascent offering, see *Zohar* 2:34a, 181b, 242b; *ZḤ* 46c; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:892.

349. **Other offerings, to make peace…** Whereas the ascent offering is totally consumed by fire and classified as Holy of Holies, i.e., an offering of greatest holiness, various other offerings (such as individual peace offerings) are termed "offerings of lesser holiness." Unlike the ascent offering, these do not have to slaughtered on the north side of the altar but can rather be slaughtered anywhere in the Temple Courtyard.

According to the *Zohar*, such "offerings of lesser holiness" nourish and assuage numerous harsh demonic forces, thereby "removing" them from interfering in holiness, according to the Divine Will. Unlike the ascent offering, these offerings do not stimulate the union of *Shekhinah* and *Tif'eret*, or the ascent to *Binah* (known as Holy of Holies). Consequently, they do not have to be slaughtered on the north side, which symbolizes *Gevurah*, who stimulates *Shekhinah*.

See above, notes 344, 346. On the "offerings of lesser holiness," see M *Zevaḥim* 5:6–8.

350. ***The priest shall wear his linen raiment…*** Rabbi Shim'on associates the word בד (*bad*), *linen*, with the root בדד (*bdd*), "to separate." Thus the priest's *linen raiment* is special, unique, and holy.

On this midrashic reading of *bad*, see BT *Yoma* 71b. The full verse in Leviticus 6 reads: *The priest shall wear his linen raiment and linen breeches he shall wear on his body, and he shall take away the ashes to which the fire has reduced the ascent offering on the altar and put them beside the altar*. The verse in Leviticus 16 actually pertains to the high priest on Yom Kippur.

351. ***Human and beast You deliver…*** As mentioned above (note 346), the term אדם (*adam*), *human*, refers not only to the human being but also to the *sefirot*, which are depicted in the form of Primordial Adam. (Technically, *adam* refers to the configuration of eight *sefirot* from *Ḥokhmah* through *Yesod*, whose core is *Tif'eret*). An offering brought by

adam, *a human*, stimulates the ascent and unification of the sefirotic *adam*.

The term בהמה (*behemah*), *beast*, refers not only to the animal being offered but also to the forces below *Shekhinah*, including beastly demonic forces who are nourished by the sacrificed body.

See above, note 348; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:926. For the full verse in Psalms, see above, note 344. On this verse, see *Zohar* 1:64b; 2:178a (*SdTs*), 244b; 3:48a, 91a, 147a. The verse in Leviticus reads: *When* אדם (*adam*), *a person, from among you brings an offering to YHVH*, מן הבהמה (*min ha-behemah*), *of* [or: *from*] *animals* [or: *beasts*], *from herd and from flock you shall bring your offering*. The verse can also be construed: *When a person from among you brings an offering min ha-behemah, of animals* [or: *beasts*], *to YHVH, from herd and from flock you shall bring your offering*. See Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:145–46.

352. **He made *human and beast*...** Corresponding to the sefirotic *adam* and the beastly demonic forces.

The verse in Psalms mentions *human and beast*, but what about birds, which were also created by God and can be brought as ascent offerings? Rabbi Shim'on explains their specific, limited role. The only birds that can be offered as ascent offerings are *turtledoves* or *young pigeons*, and furthermore the *turtledoves* must be mature and the *pigeons* must be *young*. Thus, "what qualifies the one, disqualifies the other." "The one" (presumably the former) symbolizes *Ḥesed* on the right; "the other" (presumably the latter), symbolizes *Gevurah* on the left.

On the turtledoves and young pigeons, see M *Ḥullin* 1:5; *Sifra, Vayiqra, nedavah* 8:3–8, 8c–d; BT *Ḥullin* 22a–b. On which symbolizes right or left, see Or *Yaqar*; Soncino; *Sullam*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3:926; *Matoq mi-Devash*. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *If his offering to YHVH is an ascent offering of birds, he shall bring forward his offering from the turtledoves or from the young pigeons*.

353. **mystery of the Chariot…** Furthermore, birds symbolize angels who accompany or carry the Chariot, and by whom *Shekhinah* (identified with Holy Spirit) ascends to unite with *Tif'eret*. The alliterative wording in Genesis—יעופף עוף (*of ye'ofef*), *Let fowl fly*—alludes specifically to two archangels, Michael and Gabriel. Similarly, two types of birds can be offered as ascent offerings. Michael and Gabriel, on the right and the left, adorn and prepare *Shekhinah* to ascend and join Her Husband—corresponding to the activity of the sefirotic right and left arms (*Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*), who embrace *Shekhinah*.

On the verse in Genesis alluding to angels, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 1:3; *Zohar* 1:12b; cf. *Devarim Rabbah* 8:2. On *of ye'ofef*, *Let fowl fly*, alluding to Michael and Gabriel, see *Zohar* 1:46b; Baḥya ben Asher on Genesis 1:21; cf. BT *Berakhot* 4b. The numerical value of גבריאל (*Gavriel*), is equivalent to that of יעופף (*ye'ofef*).

On the embrace of *Shekhinah*, see above, note 346. On God being "exalted alone," see Isaiah 2:11: *YHVH alone will be exalted on that day*.

354. **A poor man…** He can afford only a simple offering of turtledoves or young pigeons. According to "books of the ancients," such an offering can unite the *sefirot* but does not nourish the lower forces. However, Rabbi Shim'on disagrees, insisting that even this simple offering benefits both higher and lower realms.

On the offering of the poor consisting of these birds, see Leviticus 5:7, 11; 12:8; 14:21–22.

355. **the bond of all…** The ascent offering, symbolizing the ascent of *Shekhinah*, attains the realm of *Binah*, known as Holy of Holies. Rabbi El'azar asks his father about the devotion and aspiration of those involved on earth—the priests who bring the offering, the Levites who participate by singing, and those Israelites who offer prayer. How high does their aspiration ascend?

On the ascent offering, see above, notes 343–46. On the participation of priests, Levites, and Israel, see *Zohar* 1:51b; 3:32a–b, 241a.

356. **to *Ein Sof*...** The human will and aspiration reaches the ultimate source of all wills.

Whereas *Ein Sof* does not produce anything directly, the first *sefirah, Keter*, generates all the other *sefirot. Keter* shares in the incomprehensible and undifferentiated nature of *Ein Sof*, and is thus called אין (*Ayin*), "Nothingness," the divine nothingness. The first *sefirah* to emerge from *Ayin* is the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*, known as "beginning," abiding in Divine Thought and faintly perceived by human thought. The final *sefirah* to emerge is *Malkhut* (or *Shekhinah*), known as *end of the matter*.

All the sefirotic "lights and lamps" depend upon the stream of emanation issuing ultimately from *Ein Sof*, yet even they cannot comprehend it. Only *Ayin* (also called Will) knows this ultimate realm, though incompletely. When the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah* and the realm of *Binah* (known as the World that is Coming) ascend, they attain merely a scent of Infinity.

The notion that the *sefirot* cannot comprehend *Ein Sof* parallels the statement in the Gnostic *Gospel of Truth* (22:27–29), according to which the aeons (divine emanations) below *Nous* (Intellect) are unaware of the hidden divinity: "It was quite amazing that they were in the Father without knowing Him." Cf. *Zohar* 1:30a, 49a.

The phrase "upon it" (in the clause "depend upon it for their existence") follows the reading of the Constantinople edition of the *Zohar*: ביה (*beih*), whereas the manuscripts and other printed editions read בהו (*be-ho*), "upon them." Conceivably, "them" refers to *Ein Sof* and *Ayin*. See Lachower and Tishby, *Mishnat ha-Zohar*, 1:119, 500; Scholem (who all adopt the reading *beih*). Cf. *Or Yaqar*; Moses Cordovero, *Pardes Rimmonim*, 11:5, 63c; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

On ascending or binding "to *Ein Sof*," see *Zohar* 1:65a, 84a; 2:144a, 213b, 216b, 219b, 244b (*Heikh*), 259b (*Heikh*), 260b (*Heikh*). On *Ayin*, see Matt, "*Ayin:* The Concept of Nothingness." On *Binah* as the World that is Coming, see above, pp. 34–35, n. 87. On inhaling a scent of wisdom or mystery, see *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 1:20 (on 1:3); *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Wistenetzki), 1056.

357. **This is not pleasure…** Rabbi Shim'on may be contrasting the incomplete pleasure described in the preceding sentence with the *pleasing aroma* produced by the combination of prayer (of Israel), song (of the Levites), and offering (of the priest). The priest, the Levites, and Israel symbolize respectively *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*, who together constitute the core of the sefirotic *adam*. Their combined will is truly *pleasing*, as implied by the Aramaic word רעוא (*ra'ava*), which means both "will" and "pleasure." This word appears consistently in *Targum Onqelos* to render the term ניחוח (*niḥoaḥ*), *pleasing*, as indicated here by the phrase "according to its translation."

The word "pleasure" (in the clause "This is not pleasure") renders נייחא (*neyaḥa*), "rest, tranquility, comfort." In the *Zohar* this term can also mean "satisfaction, gratification"—as in the rabbinic expressions נייח דנפשא (*neyaḥ de-nafsha*), "comfort of the soul," and נחת רוח (*naḥat ruaḥ*), "comfort of the spirit"—or "pleasure." Here it is associated with the phrase ריח ניחוח (*reiaḥ niḥoaḥ*), *pleasing aroma*. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *I will turn your cities into ruins and devastate your sanctuaries, and I will not smell* ניחחכם בריח (*be-reiaḥ niḥoḥakhem*), *your pleasing aroma*. On the *pleasing aroma* of sacrifices, see, e.g., Genesis 8:21; Exodus 29:18; Leviticus 1:9; Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1:162–63.

For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On "mystery of *adam*," see above, notes 346, 351.

358. **this Other Side is delivered…** By the ritual of sacrifice, the demonic powers are subdued.

Based on a midrashic interpretation, Rabbi Shim'on associates *command* with "idolatry." See *Bereshit Rabbah* 16:6, where the basic laws of morality are derived from God's command to Adam in the Garden of Eden: "*YHVH Elohim commanded the human, saying, 'From every tree of the garden you may surely eat'* (Genesis 2:16). Rabbi Levi said, 'He issued him six commands. *He commanded*, concerning idolatry, as is said: *For he has keenly gone after human commands* (Hosea 5:11); *YHVH*, concerning blasphemy...; *Elohim*, these are the judges...; *the human*, this is murder...; *saying*, concerning גלוי עריות (*gillui arayot*), exposing nudity (fornication) [as shown by analogy from this proof-text, which mentions sexual immorality] : *Saying: If a man divorces his wife* (Jeremiah 3:1); *From every tree of the garden you may surely eat*, commanding him concerning theft.'"

Since *command* implies idolatry, Rabbi Shim'on interprets the verse in Leviticus concerning the ascent offering—*Command Aaron and his sons*...—as follows: Aaron is instructed to bum the evil thought (or temptation) of idolatry, which is associated with the demonic power. By providing that dark power with the smoke and fatty portions of the sacrifice, Aaron assuages it, thereby removing it from the holy realm. Now, "this *command* [namely idolatry] is under their [i.e., the priests'] control."

On the midrashic interpretation quoted above, see BT *Sanhedrin* 56a–b; *Zohar* 1:35b–36a, 60a; 2:83b; 3:27a. On assuaging the demonic force, see above, note 348. The full verse in Leviticus reads: *Command Aaron and his sons, saying, "This is the teaching of the ascent offering. It is the very ascent offering* [or: *It is that which ascends*] *upon its hearth on the altar all night till morning, and the fire of the altar shall keep burning on it."*

359. ***Command the Children of Israel...*** In this verse, how can the word *command* possibly refer to idolatry? Rabbi Shim'on explains that here idolatry is under

Israel's control, as long as they fulfill the divine will by following the commandments of Torah.

360. **This entire verse…** The verse in Leviticus—*Command Aaron and his sons, saying*…—alludes to crowning *Shekhinah* (identified with Holy Spirit) and separating the demonic spirit from holiness. The former is accomplished by devotion and prayer; the latter, by the act of sacrifice, since this includes providing a portion to the demonic forces, thereby assuaging and removing them.

361. ***Command*—idolatry…** See *Bereshit Rabbah* 16:6 (quoted in full above, note 358): "*YHVH Elohim commanded the human, saying, 'From every tree of the garden you may surely eat'* (Genesis 2:16). Rabbi Levi said, 'He issued him six commands. *He commanded*, concerning idolatry, as is said: *For he has keenly gone after human commands* (Hosea 5:11);… *saying*, concerning גלוי עריות (*gillui arayot*), exposing nudity (fornication) [as shown by analogy from this proof-text, which mentions sexual immorality]: *Saying: If a man divorces his wife* (Jeremiah 3:1).'"

Based loosely on this midrashic reading, Rabbi Shim'on interprets the verse in Leviticus—*Command Aaron and his sons, saying*—as follows: *Command* refers to idolatry and the impure spirit; *saying* refers to woman, namely the Divine Woman, *Shekhinah*, who is associated with *awe*. Thus the verse demonstrates the ascent of *Shekhinah* and the banishment of the impure spirit.

The phrase *human and beast* alludes to human aspiration and the animal offering, as well as to the sefirotic *adam* and the beastly demonic forces. See above, note 351.

The full verse in Proverbs reads: *Charm is deceitful, and beauty fleeting; a woman in awe of YHVH is to be praised*.

362. ***This is the teaching…*** The word *this* alludes to *Shekhinah*, the Divine Presence who is always right here. *The ascent offering* refers to Her rising above to unite with *Tif'eret* and then attain the rung of *Binah*, known as Holy of Holies.

On *Shekhinah* as זאת (*zot*), *this*, see above, notes 301, 345. On the sefirotic significance of *the ascent offering*, see above, notes 344–46.

363. **Alternatively, *This is the teaching*...** Again, the word *this* alludes to *Shekhinah*, who is known as Assembly of Israel. However, now Rabbi Ḥiyya (the apparent speaker) associates *the ascent offering* with an evil thought ascending in one's mind to lead him astray. A person must burn away this threatening thought, and with the help of *Shekhinah* (identified with *night*), he is purified.

On the association of the ascent offering with an evil thought, see *Vayiqra Rabbah* 7:3, in the name of Rabbi Shim'on son of Yoḥai: "The ascent offering is due only for sinful imagining." See JT *Yoma* 8:9, 45b; *Shevu'ot* 1:6, 33b; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Leviticus 6:2; *Tanḥuma, Lekh Lekha* 10; *Tetsavveh* 15; *Tsav* 7, 13; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tsav* 9; *Zohar* 1:70a; 3:6a, 11a, 87a.

The image of a river of fire derives from Daniel 7:10: *A river of fire was flowing and gushing from His presence, a thousand thousands serving Him, a myriad of myriads attending Him*. According to various sources, angels or heavenly princes of the nations are punished in the river of fire. See *Ma'yan Ḥokhmah* (*Beit ha-Midrash*, 1:60); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 20; *Sefer Ḥasidim* (ed. Margaliot), 530; Moses de León, *Seder Gan Eden*, 139; *Zohar* 1:43b (*Heikh*), 69a; 2:6b, 19b (*MhN*), 49a, 52b, 239b, 252b (*Heikh*); 3:27a, 30a. On this river, see also above, p. 205, nn. 288–89.

On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 10, n. 25. For the full verse in Leviticus, see above, note 358.

364. **when this is subdued...** When the evil thought and its demonic power are subdued, *Shekhinah* ascends. On the portion offered to the demonic force, see above, note 348.

365. **When the Dwelling was built...** When the Dwelling was completed, the demonic force was vanquished

and eliminated. By erecting the earthly Dwelling, Moses also restored *Shekhinah* (the sefirotic Dwelling) to Her full glory.

According to midrashic literature, once the Dwelling was erected, demons ceased from the world. See *Tanḥuma, Naso* 23; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Naso* 27; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 5, 21b; *Midrash Tehillim* 91:5; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 12:3, 9. On the Dwellings erected below and above, see above, notes 285, 287. The full verse in Exodus reads: *Moses erected* [or: *raised*] *the Dwelling and placed its sockets and set up its boards and inserted its bars and erected its posts*.

366. ***I will raise the fallen booth of David…*** *Shekhinah* is symbolized by the *booth of David* and is called *Virgin Israel*. There seems to be a contradiction between the two verses in Amos, one of which implies that God will raise *Shekhinah* while the other insists that She will not rise again. In order to resolve the contradiction, Rabbi Ḥiyya (the apparent speaker) first examines the wording *not again*, which implies that previously *Shekhinah* did rise. In fact, She did, for whereas when Israel left Egypt the blessed Holy One raised *Shekhinah* (who always accompanies Her people in exile), later when Israel returned from the Babylonian exile She rose Herself, since "the blessed Holy One had no desire for" Israel on account of their sin of intermarrying with foreign women in Babylon. However, in the time to come, *Shekhinah* will not *rise again* on Her own; rather, the blessed Holy One Himself will raise Her. Then, He will restore David as the Messianic king. Similarly, by erecting the Dwelling Moses raised *Shekhinah*.

On the verse in Amos 5, see the midrashic transformation in BT *Berakhot* 4b: "לא תוסיף קום בתולת ישראל נפלה (*Nafelah lo tosif qum betulat yisra'el*), *Fallen, not to rise again, is Virgin Israel…*נפלה ולא תוסיף לנפול עוד (*Nafelah ve-lo tosif linpol od*), *She has fallen* and *She will not* fall *again*. *Qum betulat yisra'el, Rise, O Virgin Israel!"* Cf. *Zohar* 3:6a–b; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 122–23. On the contrast between the two

verses in Amos, see *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 16:8; *Pesiqta Rabbati* 29, 138b.

On Israel's sin of intermarrying in Babylon, see Ezra 9–10; BT *Berakhot* 4a; Rashi on Leviticus 18:2; *Zohar* 1:260a (*Hash*); 2:7a; 3:221a. The full verse in Amos 9 reads: *On that day I will raise the fallen booth of David, and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in days of old*. The full verse in Jeremiah reads: *They shall serve YHVH their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them*. Cf. above, note 229.

367. **When Moses erected the Dwelling…** When Moses erected the earthly Dwelling, *Shekhinah* (the sefirotic Dwelling) was also erected, and *Binah* ("the supernal Dwelling") sustained all. The phrase "the other Dwelling" refers to *Shekhinah*, who is also indicated by the word את (*et*). She was established by *Tif'eret*, the *sefirah* linked with Moses.

Grammatically, the word את (*et*) is usually an accusative particle with no clear independent sense. However, already in rabbinic times, Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that the presence of *et* in a biblical verse amplifies the apparent meaning. Here, as often in the *Zohar*, את (*et*) alludes to *Shekhinah*, who comprises the totality of divine speech, the entire alphabet from א (*alef*) to ת (*tav*). On the significance of *et*, see BT *Pesaḥim* 22b, *Ḥagigah* 12a–b; *Zohar* 1:15b, 247a; 2:81b, 90a. On the various Dwellings, see above, notes 285, 287.

368. **But not everything was arranged yet…** How could Moses erect the Dwelling before all its components were fitted together, which is mentioned only later in this verse? The full verse reads: *Moses erected the Dwelling and placed its sockets and set up its boards and inserted its bars and erected its posts*.

369. **By three aspects Moses erected…** The continuation of the verse explains how *Moses erected the Dwelling*. The three actions specified here (*erected the*

Dwelling and placed its sockets and set up its boards) correspond to three aspects of *Shekhinah*.

In the last sentence "this side" refers to the side of holiness. On the Other Side being subdued, see above, note 365. On Moses alone erecting the Dwelling, see above, notes 266, 286.

370. ***He placed its sockets…*** Once the Dwelling was securely established, Samael was jolted and the whole Other Side destabilized.

The biblical term אדן (*eden*) can mean "socket, base, pedestal." The Aramaic equivalent, סמכא (*samekha*), appears frequently in *Targum Onqelos*, rendering *eden*. Here, the plural סמכין (*samekhin*) can mean "sockets, pedestals" and also "pillars."

"Demonic dazzle" renders טהירו (*tehiru*), which derives from an Aramaic root meaning "brightness, noon." One class of demons is named טהרי (*tiharei*), "noonday demons." See above, p. 113, n. 18, and below at note 450. Cf. *Zohar* 1:15a, which mentions the holy *tehiru*, "luster." On the demonic quality of the *tehiru* in Sabbatian theology, see Scholem, *Sabbatai Ṣevi*, 299–302.

371. ***On that day…*** The blessed Holy One will only raise and restore *Shekhinah* after the wicked—including the wicked of Israel—have been punished.

372. ***I will repair their breaches…*** The full verse reads: *On that day I will raise the fallen booth of David, and repair* פרציהן (*pirtseihen*], *their* [understood to mean: *its* or *her*] *breaches, and raise up* הריסותיו (*hari-sotav*), *its* [or: *his*] *ruins, and rebuild it* [or: *her*] *as in days of old*.

Since the verse begins by referring to *the fallen booth of David* (which is feminine singular in Hebrew), it should continue with the corresponding feminine form פרציה (*peratseha*), *her breaches*. Why the wording *pirtseihen, their breaches*? Rabbi Yitsḥak explains that *their* refers to the wicked.

373. ***And raise up his ruins…*** To be consistent, the verse should read *her ruins*. However, *his* refers to David, who represents the kingdom of Israel and *Malkhut* (Kingdom). When Israel's enemy dominates the world, the Holy Kingdom Herself is weakened.

On the contrast between the wicked kingdom and the Holy Kingdom (one being full, and the other desolate), see above, notes 292, 341.

374. ***And rebuild her as in days of old…*** *Shekhinah* is symbolized by the moon, whose diminished light will one day be restored, becoming as bright as the sun.

The verse in Isaiah reads: *The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold, as the light of the seven days* [of Creation]. See above, p. 169, n. 178; p. 255, n. 450 (quoting BT *Ḥullin* 60b).

375. **How did he erect it?…** The full verse reads: *Moses erected the Dwelling and placed its sockets and set up its boards and inserted its bars and erected its posts*. Two tenons were cut into the bottom of each upright board to fit into the sockets. (See Exodus 26:15–25). *Targum Onqelos* renders the term יד (*yad*), "tenon," as ציר (*tsir*), which actually means "hinge, pivot." Here Rabbi Yitsḥak elaborates on this sense.

376. ***Why he conveyed?…*** The verse reads: *Moses erected the Dwelling* ויתן (*va-yitten*), *and gave* [i.e., *placed, set*], *its sockets*….Rabbi Yitsḥak focuses on the hyperliteral meaning, *gave*, and explains that Moses *conveyed* power to the holy sockets, thereby weakening and eliminating the demonic sockets. As explained above (note 370), the Aramaic term סמכין (*samekhin*) can mean "sockets" and also "pillars."

377. **Similarly, it is written …** The strengthening of the holy sockets weakens the demonic sockets. Conversely, the razing of Jerusalem empowers Israel's enemy, the Edomites (who represent Rome). Eventually, though,

Israel's enemies will be defeated and Jerusalem will be restored. Previously, the enemy was able to prevail because Jerusalem's foundation stones lacked sufficient divine radiance, but in the time to come the stones will sparkle brilliantly and be firmly embedded and impregnable.

378. **Those former foundations will be nullified…** Not so, for Isaiah prophesies that God *will set your stones*, mending what is broken.

In the verse from Isaiah, פוך (*pukh*) refers to the dark mineral antimony or a semi-precious stone or hard mortar. According to the verse in Kings, Jezebel paints her eyes with a mascara called *pukh*, probably *kohl*, which is derived from antimony. The verse in Isaiah reads: *Behold, I will set your stones* בפוך (*ba-pukh*), *with antimony* [or: *turquoise, carbuncles, hard mortar*], *and lay your foundations with sapphires*.

379. **Reapers of the Field…** The Companions who harvest secrets of Torah that are sprouting in the field of *Shekhinah*.

See *Zohar* 1:156a (*ST*), 216a; 2:37a, 79b, 85b, 258a (*Heikh*); 3:106a, 127b (*IR*), 141b (*IR*), 143a (*IR*), 144a (*IR*), 214b, 297a; *ZḤ* 85d (*MhN, Rut*); *Or Yaqar*; Liebes, *Studies in the Zohar*, 175–76, n. 99. On *Shekhinah* as field, see Vol. 2, p. 206, n. 22.

380. **Heaven forbid that those foundation stones…** The original foundation stones were not actually seized or burned by the enemy; rather, God hid them away, and will eventually restore them. Isaiah's prophecy—*Behold, I will set your stones with pukh, antimony*—implies that only those who paint their eyes with *pukh, kohl* (from *antimony*), will be able to see those stones.

On the concealment of the original foundation stones of the Temple, see *Nitsotsei Orot*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Scholem. On putting a substance in one's eyes in order to see supernatural phenomena, see BT *Berakhot* 6a: "If one wishes to see [demons], let him take the afterbirth of a

black she-cat born to a black she-cat, first-born of a first-born, and let him roast it in fire, grind it to powder, and fill his eye with it, and he will see them."

381. ***as YHVH returns…*** Rabbi El'azar reads the intransitive verb as if it were transitive: *as YHVH returns Zion*—restoring her original foundation stones. Cf. the opposite midrashic treatment of the unusual transitive form שב (*shav*), "return," interpreting it intransitively! See *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 14; *Sifrei*, Numbers 84, 161; BT *Megillah* 29a.

382. **except by applying a certain substance…** See above, note 380.

383. **All those stones…** The original foundation stones will be restored, while new foundations of sapphire will bolster them all around.

384. ***He will swallow up death…*** When the Temple is rebuilt, the demonic force and the Angel of Death will be totally eliminated. This positive "swallowing" counters the negative instance when the Temple was destroyed and the land depopulated, as described in Lamentations: *The Lord has swallowed up without pity all the habitations of Jacob*. Then, Israel was forced to drink the cup of God's wrath, which will eventually be drunk by the enemy. See Isaiah 51:22–23.

385. **Now, you might say…** Perhaps, just as Israel suffers in exile for only a certain fixed time, so death and the demonic forces will be vanquished only temporarily. But no, this ultimate triumph will last *forever. Shekhinah* and Her people will be restored permanently, and unlike the temporary Dwelling in the desert, the future Temple will be established firmly and eternally.

"Pillars" renders סמכין (*samekhin*), on which see above, note 370. The full verse in Isaiah reads: *He will swallow up death forever. My Lord YHVH will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of His people He will remove from all the earth—for YHVH has spoken*.

386. ויתן **(*va-yitten*), *He conveyed…*** The verse reads: *Moses erected the Dwelling* ויתן (*va-yitten*), *and gave* [i.e., *placed, set*], *its sockets*…. Why does the verse employ the verb *va-yitten* (literally *he gave*)? Because Moses was battling Samael and he had to "convey" power to the holy sockets, in order to weaken and eliminate the demonic sockets.

See above, note 376. On Satan's accusations, see above, notes 16–17.

387. **first of Nisan…** See Exodus 40:17: *It happened in the first month in the second year, on the first of the month, that the Dwelling was erected*. In the biblical calendar the first month of the year is Nisan. Here, this month shares in the quality of harsh Judgment that characterizes Rosh Hashanah (the beginning of Tishrei), and it is dominated by the Other Side, who is symbolized by the ox.

See BT *Berakhot* 33a: "It was taught in the name of Rabbi Me'ir: 'If an ox's head is in a [fodder] basket, climb up to the roof and throw away the ladder from under you.' Shemu'el said, 'This applies only to a black ox and in the month of Nisan, because then Satan is dancing between his horns.'" See BT *Pesaḥim* 112b.

As Moses placed the sockets in the Dwelling below, his sefirotic counterpart (*Tif'eret*) placed the sockets in the Dwelling above (*Shekhinah*). As the earthly Dwelling was erected, *Shekhinah* was erected above, and *Binah* ("a higher Dwelling") illumined all.

See Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets*, 60. On the dangerous quality of Nisan, see *Zohar* 3:186a. On the demonic nature of the ox, see above, pp. 78–79, n. 65. On the various Dwellings, see above, notes 285, 287.

388. **we see three Dwellings in a verse…** Why does *the Dwelling* appear three times in a single verse? Furthermore, why is there a Dwelling at all, since *Shekhinah* deserves a more permanent home?

On three Dwellings, cf. above, notes 285, 287. The full verse in Numbers reads: *On the day the Dwelling was*

erected, the cloud covered the Dwelling of the Tent of the Covenant, and in the evening it remained over the Dwelling like a semblance of fire until morning.

389. ***The heaven is My throne…*** God selected Israel as His treasured possession. Israel's "rungs" are apparently priests, Levites, and Israel, corresponding to *Ḥesed, Gevurah*, and *Tif'eret*. Through their holiness and devotion, Israel enables God to manifest His presence below and not only above.

For Israel as God's "inheritance," see Deuteronomy 32:9: *For YHVH's share is His people, Jacob His allotted inheritance*.

390. **Alternatively, *The heaven is My throne…*** *The heaven* symbolizes *Tif'eret*, the rung occupied by Jacob, whose image is engraved on the divine Throne. Upon this Throne sits *Binah*. *The earth* symbolizes *Shekhinah*, the rung occupied by David, who gazes upward to *Tif'eret* (pictured as "the resplendent speculum").

On the image of Jacob engraved on the Throne, see *Bereshit Rabbah* 68:12; 82:2; *Eikhah Rabbah* 2:2; *Targum Yerushalmi* and *Targum Yerushalmi* (frag.), Genesis 28:12; BT *Ḥullin* 91b (and Rashi, ad loc., s.v. *bi-dyoqno*); *Alfa Beita de-Rabbi Akiva* B (*Battei Midrashot*, 2:415–16); *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 35; *Zohar* 1:72a, 168a, 222a; Moses de León, Commentary on the Ten *Sefirot*, 338b; Wolfson, *Along the Path*, 1–62. On *Tif'eret* as "the resplendent speculum," see above, p. 100, n. 119.

391. **He wished to extend further below…** To earth. Whereas in Isaiah the questions *Where is the house…?* and *Where is My resting place?* are purely rhetorical, indicating that God cannot be confined to any dwelling, here they convey God's desire to dwell on earth.

392. **The whole time that Israel journeyed…** The Israelites journeyed along with the Dwelling until they crossed into the land of Canaan. Then, at Shiloh the Dwelling was set up semi-permanently. Thus, holiness was

conveyed from the Dwelling in the desert to the semi-permanent Dwelling in Shiloh, but there was no complete rest for the Divine Presence until the Temple was constructed by Solomon. The three references to *the Dwelling* in the verse from Numbers allude to these three stages.

See above, note 388. On Shiloh, see Joshua 18:1. Cf. Judges 18:31; 1 Samuel 1. On Jerusalem or the Temple as God's resting place, see Psalms 132:14; *Tosefta Zevaḥim* 13:20; *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 66; *Midrash Tanna'im*, Deuteronomy 12:9; JT *Megillah* 1:11, 72d; BT *Zevaḥim* 119a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 20:7; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 1:16; 7:5; *Zohar* 2:221b, 242a.

393. **So there is a Dwelling, and there is a House…** The latter being more permanent.

394. **The Temple is an eternal resting place…** Where numerous heavenly powers appeared and where the physical components and holy works represented divine elements. The portable Dwelling in the desert contained fewer (or smaller) forms. See *Zohar* 3:2b (standard edition).

395. **he could not comprehend it…** See *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Shemini* 11: "When Moses ascended, the blessed Holy One showed him on the mountain how to make the Dwelling. When He showed him the making of the lamp stand, Moses found it difficult. The blessed Holy One said to him, 'Here, I will make it right in front of you!' What did the blessed Holy One do? He showed him white fire, red fire, black fire, and green fire, and from them He made the lamp stand—*its cups, its calyxes, and its blossoms* (Exodus 25:31) and the six shafts. He said to him, *This is the fashioning of the lamp stand* (Numbers 8:4), for the blessed Holy One showed him with His finger. Even so, it was difficult for him. What did the blessed Holy One do? He inscribed it on his hand, and said to him, 'Go down and make it as I inscribed it on your hand,' as is written: *See, and make it by their*

pattern [*that you are shown on the mountain*] (Exodus 25:40).... Even so, it was difficult for him, and he said 'מקשה (*miqshah*), *hammered work* (ibid. 25:31)—מה קשה (*mah qashah*), how hard, it is to make it!' The blessed Holy One said to him, 'Throw the gold into the fire, and it will be made by itself,' as is written: *Hammered work it will be made*—it will be made by itself!"

On Moses' difficulty and his being shown various components of the Dwelling, see above, notes 14–15.

396. **If those, who had not seen...** If the artisans, who experienced no vision of the Dwelling, were able to do *as YHVH had commanded*, then Moses, who was shown everything, surely knew how to make it. Still, even though Moses did not actually make the Dwelling, everything was done "by him"—that is, under his supervision—so in this sense he fulfilled the divine command *See, and make it*.

The full verse in Exodus 39 reads: *Moses saw all the work* [or: *tasks*], *and look, they had done it as YHVH had commanded, thus they had done it, and Moses blessed them*.

397. **Alternatively, Moses withdrew...** And the blessed Holy One agreed to his withdrawal, formally commissioning Bezalel and Oholiab and their assistants. Otherwise, the honor would not have been transferred to anyone else.

Exodus 31:2 reads in full: *See, I have called by name Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah*. Exodus 31:6 reads in full: *And I, here, I have set with him Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, and in the heart of all who are wise-hearted I have set wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded you*. (The precise wording *and with him Oholiab* appears in Exodus 38:23.) The full verse in Exodus 36 reads: *Bezalel and Oholiab and every wise-hearted man in whom YHVH has given wisdom and understanding to know how to do the task of the holy work, shall do all that YHVH has commanded*.

398. **all work endures only when completed…** Since Moses completed everything by erecting the Dwelling, he, in effect, made it himself.

On completing an act as being tantamount to performing it entirely, see BT *Sotah* 13b. On Moses alone being able to erect the Dwelling, see above, notes 266, 286.

399. ***Do not rejoice over me…*** *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) uttered this verse, referring to Her enemy. *Shekhinah*, who has temporarily fallen, will rise again, whereas Her enemy is doomed.

The phrase "Holy Kingdom" refers to *Shekhinah*, who is known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom), as well as to Israel, Her people. On the conflict between the two kingdoms, see above, note 373. On Assembly of Israel as a title of *Shekhinah*, see above, p. 10, n. 25.

400. **many times Assembly of Israel has fallen…** The alternation in this paragraph between *Shekhinah* (known as Assembly of Israel) and Her people demonstrates the intimate link between them.

On *Shekhinah* sharing Israel's exile, see *Mekhilta, Pisḥa* 14, in the name of Rabbi Akiva: "Wherever Israel went in exile, *Shekhinah*, as it were, went into exile with them. When they were exiled to Egypt, *Shekhinah* went into exile with them…. When they were exiled to Babylon, *Shekhinah* went into exile with them…. And when in the future they return, *Shekhinah*, as it were, will return with them." See above, pp. 234–35, n. 386.

The context in Psalms (83:4–6) reads: *Against Your people they devise cunning counsel and conspire against Your treasured* [or: *protected*] *ones. They say, "Come let us obliterate them as a nation, and the name of Israel will no longer be recalled." For they have conspired with a single heart, against You they sealed a pact.*

401. **it is always raised by Moses** When Moses (who symbolizes *Tif'eret*) brought Israel out of Egypt, he thereby

raised *Shekhinah* from exile. Soon afterward, by erecting the Dwelling (which symbolizes *Shekhinah*) he raised Her.

402. ***When they moved they moved…*** The context in Ezekiel (1:19–21) describes the חיות (*ḥayyot*), *living beings*, and the אופנים (*ofanim*), *wheels*, which move the heavenly chariot-throne. These verses read in full: *When the living beings moved, the wheels moved beside them; and when the living beings rose off the ground, the wheels rose too. Wherever the spirit would go they went—wherever the spirit would go—and the wheels rose alongside them, for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels. When these* [literally *they*] *moved, those* [literally *they*] *moved, and when these* [literally *they*] *stood* [or: *halted*], *those* [literally *they*] *stood* [or: *halted*], *and when these* [literally *they*] *rose off the ground, the wheels rose alongside them—for the spirit of the living being was in the wheels*.

At first, Rabbi Shim'on reads the last verse hyperliterally: *When they moved, they moved; and when they stood, they stood*…. This, of course, seems obvious; but he explains that *when they moved* refers to the living beings, who impel the wheels.

In Ezekiel 1:20–21, the noun חיה (*ḥayyah*), *living being*, appears in the singular, apparently to emphasize the unity of the ensemble of four living beings. See Greenberg, *Ezekiel*, 48. The quotation at the end of this paragraph is a conflation of Ezekiel 1:19 and 1:21.

403. **Twenty-four lookout windows …** One within the other, all situated within one huge window frame on the east side, which is guarded by angelic watchmen.

"Lookout windows" renders משקופי (*mashqofei*). The Hebrew term משקוף (*mashqof*) means "lintel," but here *mashqofei* connotes "windows, window openings, window frames," perhaps based on שקפים (*shequfim*) in 1 Kings 6:4; 7:4; or on the verb השקיף (*hishqif*), "to look down from above" (see Genesis 26:8; 2 Kings 9:30, where this verb refers to

looking out of a window). See *Zohar* 2:143a, 172a, 181a; *ZḤ* 15c (*MhN*), 76c (*MhN, Rut*), 90b–d (*MhN, Rut*).

404. **Below them are twenty-four pedestals…** Upon which stand twenty-four angelic pillars.

"Those others" are described in the following paragraph. "Pedestals" renders סמכין (*samekhin*), "sockets, bases, pedestals." See above, note 370. The verse in Zechariah reads: *If you walk in My paths and keep My charge, then you will govern My house and guard My courts, and I will let you move about among these standing here* [literally: *these standing ones*]. See *Zohar* 3:260a.

405. **all those rulers standing above them…** These higher angels fly through the world and examine human activity, while certain angels convey human speech up to heaven.

The verse in Ecclesiastes reads: *For a bird of heaven will carry the voice, and a winged creature will report the word*. This verse is understood as alluding to angels in *Devarim Rabbah* 6:10; *Zohar* 1:34b, 92a; 3:138a (*IR*); Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Rimmon*, 203. Cf. above, note 353.

406. ***When these moved, those moved…*** As the living beings moved, so did the wheels, because the spirit of *Shekhinah* (known as *the living being* and Holy Spirit] impelled the wheels.

Although it may sometimes seem that a higher entity is being carried by a lower one, actually the higher one performs the action. On the ark carrying those who appear to be carrying it, see *Tosefta Sotah* 8:6; BT *Sotah* 35a; *Shemot Rabbah* 36:4; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 4:20.

On the singular form *the living being*, see above at the end of note 402. On *Shekhinah* as *the living being*, see above, note 334.

407. ***For the spirit of the living being…*** The verse employs the singular form *the living being*, which seems to imply that it was not *the living beings* (in the plural) who animated the wheels. Rabbi Shim'on explains that *Shekhinah*

(*the living being*) stimulates *the living beings* on all four sides of the chariot-throne, who convey Her power to the wheels.

408. ***She is the living being…*** *Shekhinah* serves as a throne for *Tif'eret*, who is represented by the image of *adam*. Both of them together constitute a throne for *Binah*, who is known as *God of Israel*—namely *God of Tif'eret* (whose full name is *Tif'eret Yisra'el*).

The verse in Ezekiel 1, describing what lies above the angelic *living beings*, reads in full: *Above the firmament* [or: *expanse*] *over their heads—like the appearance of sapphire, image of a throne. And upon the image of a throne, an image like the appearance of a human being upon it above*.

409. **This is the *living being* below…** *Shekhinah* is below, relative to the *sefirot* above Her, who are also called "living beings." *Tif'eret*, the throne beneath *Binah*, is engraved with the image of Jacob. *Shekhinah*, the throne beneath *Tif'eret*, is symbolized by King David. On the image of Jacob engraved on the Throne, see above, note 390.

410. **a spirit issues from above…** Flowing through the *sefirot* and then, through *Shekhinah*, conducting the angelic beings and the worlds below. Similarly, Moses conveyed spirit to the Dwelling, "that rung below." Just as *Shekhinah* animates and arrays all, so Moses enlivened and arranged all the components of the Dwelling.

The verse in Ezekiel 10 reads: *She* [or: *that*] *is the living being that I saw beneath the God of Israel at the river Kevar*. The clause in Ezekiel 1:12 reappears almost exactly in Ezekiel 1:20. The full verse in Exodus reads: *Moses erected the Dwelling and placed its sockets and set up its boards and inserted its bars and erected its posts*.

411. **At first, in the Dwelling…** Moses (having attained the rung of *Tif'eret*) arranged the Dwelling (symbolizing *Shekhinah*). *Tif'eret* is the trunk of the divine body, and the completion of the portable Dwelling signifies a certain degree of intimacy between *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*.

However, King Solomon's building of the Temple symbolizes greater stability and the consummation of divine union, because Solomon represents the river of *Yesod*, which brought gratification to *Shekhinah* (symbolized by "the house").

Yesod, the divine phallus, is also known as "peace." Cf. BT *Shabbat* 152a, where Rabbi Shim'on son of Ḥalafta refers to the phallus as "peacemaker of the home." On the contrast between the two states of divine union, see *ZḤ* 62c (*ShS*).

The wordings "tranquil gratification, gratification, satisfied (love)" all render נייחא (*neyaḥa*), "rest, tranquility, comfort." In the *Zohar* this term can also mean "satisfaction, gratification, pleasure." See above, note 357 and at note 392. Here Rabbi Shim'on links *neyaḥa* with מנוחה (*menuḥah*), *rest, calm* (in the verse from Chronicles). On Jerusalem or the Temple as God's resting place, see above, note 392.

The image of the "river issuing from Eden" derives from Genesis 2:10, which reads in full: *A river issues from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four riverheads*. According to Kabbalah, this verse implies that a river of emanation (extending from *Binah* to *Yesod*) issues from *Ḥokhmah* to water *the garden* of *Shekhinah*.

412. **this was arranged by one rung...** The Dwelling was arranged by Moses and his rung of *Tif'eret*, whereas the Temple was arranged by Solomon and his rung of *Yesod*. The image of the former rung is included in the latter.

The full verse in Genesis reads: *These are the generations of Jacob: Joseph, seventeen years old, was tending the flock with his brothers, and he was a lad with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father*. Jacob symbolizes *Tif'eret*, while Joseph symbolizes *Yesod*. Rabbi Shim'on, borrowing a playful midrashic reading, conveniently breaks off his quotation with the phrase *Jacob:*

Joseph. In the Midrash, this phrase implies the similarity between these two biblical heroes. Here, it implies that Joseph's sefirotic rung (*Yesod*) is included in Jacob's (*Tif'eret*).

On the hyperliteral reading *Jacob: Joseph, see Bereshit Rabbah* 84:6; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 2; *Tanḥuma, Noaḥ* 5; *Vayeshev* 1, *Miqqets* 3; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Vayeshev* 5; *Midrash Tehillim* 9:7; *Bemidbar Rabbah* 14:5; Moses de León, *Sheqel ha-Qodesh*, 10 (12–13); *Zohar* 1:21b, 85a, 176b, 180a, 182b; 2:145a.

413. **The beginning that Moses undertook…** By erecting the Dwelling, Moses elevated *Shekhinah* (pictured as a central point), who was sunken and whose light was diminished.

Grammatically, the word את (*et*) is usually an accusative particle with no clear independent sense. However, already in rabbinic times, Naḥum of Gimzo and his disciple Rabbi Akiva taught that the presence of *et* in a biblical verse amplifies the apparent meaning. Here, as often in the *Zohar*, את (*et*) alludes to *Shekhinah*, who comprises the totality of divine speech, the entire alphabet from א (*alef*) to ת (*tav*). See above, note 367. On *Shekhinah* as a point, or the central point, see *Zohar* 1:6a; 2:204a–b, 222b, 242b; 3:250a; Moses de León, *Sefer ha-Mishqal*, 110.

The physical sockets in the Dwelling correspond to sockets (or supports) pertaining to *Shekhinah*. On the Hebrew and Aramaic terms for "socket," see above, note 370. The full verse in Exodus 38 reads: *The hundred talents of silver were for casting the sockets of the sanctuary and the sockets of the curtain, a hundred sockets for a hundred talents, a talent for a socket*. See above, note 94.

414. **ויתן (*va-yitten*), *he conveyed*…** The verse reads: *Moses erected the Dwelling* ויתן (*va-yitten*), *and gave* [i.e., *placed, set*], *its sockets*…. Rabbi Shim'on focuses on the hyperliteral meaning, *gave*, and explains that Moses *conveyed* spiritual force, which he set in the sockets (or on the supports) of *Shekhinah*. See above, note 376.

The phrase “what was needed” apparently refers both to the physical planks and posts that were set in the sockets and to the corresponding spiritual forces set in the sockets of *Shekhinah*. See above, note 94.

415. **When this point was erected …** Once *Shekhinah* was elevated, the demonic Other Side sank.

416. **this side of holiness began to strengthen…** See above, notes 370, 386. Cf. *ZḤ* 62b–c (*ShS*).

417. **If the people of Israel had not sinned…** Sin empowers the Other Side. At Mount Sinai, Israel was purified, and if they had not worshiped the Golden Calf, the demonic force would have lost all its power. Having sinned, the people had to adopt the remedy of offering the Other Side a share of the holy sacrifices, thereby assuaging him and ensuring that he would not interfere with Israel’s holy service.

The phrase “had not sinned at first” may refer to earlier instances of Israel’s faithlessness, e.g., when they complained about the lack of sustenance soon after crossing the Red Sea. See Exodus 15–17.

On Israel’s purification at Sinai and the effect of worshiping the Golden Calf, see above, note 306. On assuaging the demonic force (and on the question of whether this force has any share in the ascent offering), see above, note 348. “Sacrifices” renders נכסין (*nikhsin*), attested in N10, N41, O17, V18, *Or Yaqar*, Cremona, and Mantua; whereas O2 and later printed editions read נסכין (*niskin*), “libations.” See *Zohar* 1:173b (Vol. 3, p. 48).

418. ***Moses erected this side of holiness…*** The full verse reads: *Moses erected the Dwelling and conveyed* [or: *placed*] *its sockets and set up its boards and inserted its bars and erected its posts*. Rabbi Shim’on explains why the verb *erected* is repeated at the end of this verse.

“Come and see: *Moses erected* this side of holiness, and the Other Side—of impurity—sank. *He conveyed* (ibid.) this side of holiness, and the impure Other Side weakened. *He*

set up this side of holiness, and this Other Side—of impurity—was subdued. Then *he inserted its bars*, and then *he erected* (Exodus 40:18). Why? So that beginning and end would be erection. He began with erection and concluded with erection, because beginning and end entirely demand erection. Beginning, so that the Other Side is weakened, thereby erecting the side of holiness, so that it may endure and rise above, becoming a single bond fittingly. For whenever holiness ascends, impurity sinks low.

419. **The head of the point…** Here begins a description of the demonic rungs. "The head of the point standing beneath the rungs of the Other Side" may be the first demonic force that is manifested "outside," beneath higher, hidden demonic powers. Cordovero (*Or Yaqar*) and Tishby construe the first half of this tortuous sentence differently, which requires rearranging it somewhat and adding a bracketed word of interpretation: "The head of the point on the Other Side, which is below [holy] rungs, is the head of the rung that is outside…." *Sullam* suggests that "the point standing beneath the rungs" is the lowest major demonic power, while its "head" is pictured as Samael (who rides upon Lilith, depicted as a camel).

In any case, behind this paragraph lies the notion that the forces of evil originate in the *sefirah* of *Gevurah*, or *Din* (Judgment), which expresses divine wrath. The smoke of this fiery wrath pushes outward, breaks through the boundary of holiness, and then spreads twistingly, dispersing evil. The emergence of the demonic point corresponds to the emergence of the primordial point of *Ḥokhmah*. See *Zohar* 1:15a.

On the demonic rungs, see Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:447–74. According to *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 13, the serpent in the Garden of Eden resembled a camel (with a long neck, before the serpent lost its legs), and Samael rode this creature. See above, notes 294, 296.

According to another rabbinic tradition (*Avot de-Rabbi Natan* A, 35), one of the miracles regularly performed in the Temple was that “the wind never prevailed over the column of smoke. When the column of smoke went forth from the altar of the ascent offering, it rose straight up like a staff until it reached the sky. When the column of incense went forth from the golden altar, it entered straight into the chamber of the Holy of Holies.” In the *Zohar*, whereas the smoke of most sacrifices ascends in a straight path to heaven, the smoke from nightly offerings ascends in a twisted way, finally reaching the haunt of evil spirits and nourishing them, thereby assuaging them so that they do not wreak havoc on earth. Here, the twisting smoke indicates its demonic nature. See Vol. 5, p. 212, n. 66.

On the phrase חכים לאבאשא (*ḥakkim le-av’asha*), “skilled in doing evil,” see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 3:1; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli’ezer* 13 (both describing the serpent). Cf. Jeremiah 4:22; *Targum Yonatan*, ad loc.

For various interpretations of this paragraph, see *Or Yaqar*; *Miqdash Melekh*; *Sullam*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:475; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

420. **The head emerging to spread…** Samael, the dark masculine head, is called ‘shadow,’ and beneath him is Lilith, identified with the Angel of Death. Together, this demonic couple forms ‘the shadow of death.’

See *Zohar* 1:160b. In its simple sense, the biblical term צלמות (*tsalmavet*) means “gloom, darkness,” but according to popular folk etymology it combines צל (*tsel*), “shadow,” and מות (*mavet*), “death.” Thus it is understood here as “shadow of death.”

421. **This shadow is beginning…** The shadowy Samael is the beginning of the demonic point, far removed from *Shekhinah*, who is “the holy point existing in the middle.” The demonic point is so dark that its “color” cannot be determined and its very existence is unclear. Demonic

energy emanates from this point, spreading in various directions, while the point itself sinks and disappears.

On *Shekhinah* as the central point, see above, note 413. The phrase חשוך קבל (*ḥashokh qeval*), "dense darkness," appears in *Targum Onqelos*, Exodus 10:22, rendering אפלה חשך (*ḥoshkeh afelah*). See *Zohar* 2:140b.

422. **The darkness spreads...** Though its color is indescribable. The phrase לאתקיימא ביה (*le-itqayyama beih*), "in which to endure," could also mean "that can be fathomed." See *Miqdash Melekh*.

The demonic darkness functioned during the plague of darkness in Egypt. The context in Exodus (10:21–23) reads: *YHVH said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the heavens, that there be darkness upon the land of Egypt, a darkness one can feel." And Moses stretched out his hand over the heavens and there was dense darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. No one saw his fellow and no one rose from where he was for three days, but all the Israelites had light in their dwelling places*.

423. **This expansion spreads ...** The following description includes elements from Daniel's account of the statue in King Nebuchadnezzar's dream. See Daniel 2:32–33: *The head of that statue was of fine gold; its breast and arms were of silver; its belly and thighs, of bronze; its legs were of iron, and its feet part iron and part clay*. Daniel interprets the elements in the dream (*gold, silver*, etc.) as signifying various earthly kingdoms; here the elements are darkened and symbolize aspects of the Other Side, the counterparts of holy *sefirot*. The demonic head corresponds to *Binah*; "right and left" correspond to *Ḥesed* and *Gevurah*, the two divine arms. Whereas *Ḥesed* is symbolized by sparkling silver, the demonic silver "does not shine."

See *Or Yaqar*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:476; *Matoq mi-Devash*. On reddish gold, see above, note 300.

424. **two darknesses stand out...** Perhaps, one darkness is the "black head," from which emerges "a color

of bronze," recalling the *belly and thighs of bronze* in Daniel. This demonic power corresponds to *Tif'eret*, sometimes symbolized by bronze. The second darkness would be the "pillars" beneath the head, recalling the *legs of iron*. This demonic pair is the counterpart of *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*, the divine legs or pillars. Alternatively, the "two darknesses" are the two pillars. For various interpretations, see *Or Yaqar*; *Sullam*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:476; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

425. **Between two pillars emerges one pillar...** The demonic phallus includes all the previous aspects or colors, just as *Yesod* (the sefirotic phallus) conveys the flow from all the higher *sefirot*. Just as *Yesod* unites *Tif'eret* with *Shekhinah*, the demonic phallus unites Samael and Lilith. However, unlike *Yesod*, this phallus is uncircumcised and characterized by foreskin. "Seven known rungs" refers to the demonic head, the two arms, the belly (or torso), the two legs, and the phallic pillar itself. See *Or Yaqar*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:476; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

426. **First rung...** The demonic head is the counterpart of the three highest *sefirot*. This first demonic rung originates in *Din* (Judgment), which may be symbolized by "secrecy of smoke of fire." The demonic colored forces spread through the world, inciting perversity. See Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:476.

427. **Color of smoke...** Arousing anger. The verse in Psalms, which is usually understood to mean *There shall be no foreign god* בך (*vekha*), *among you*, is read here hyperliterally: *There shall no foreign god vekha, within you*. This *foreign god* is pictured as Samael the male, while the act of "bowing down" *to an alien god* is interpreted as "lying down" with the *alien* temptress Lilith.

On the hyperliteral reading of *vekha* (as referring to the evil impulse), see JT *Nedarim* 9a, 41b; BT *Shabbat* 105b; *Zohar* 2:182a; 3:106a–b; *ZḤ* 21a (*MhN*). On the sexual

implication of “bowing down” to a forbidden god, see Vol. 4, p. 325–26, n. 448.

428. **Color of fire…** Arousing lethal violence. The demonic male incites causeless killing, while the demonic female instigates fatal warfare.

429. **color of smoke descends…** Rabbi Shim’on returns to the first demonic color.

On the “sunken point,” the “shadow,” and Samael riding a camel, see above, notes 419–21. The name קצפיאל (*Qatspi’el*) is based on the word קצף (*qetseph*), “anger.” The manuscripts and early printed editions read instead קפציאל (*Qaphtsi’el*), based on the word קפץ (*qaphats*), “to jump, leap.” See *Or Yaqar*; *Nitsotsei Zohar*; Margaliot, *Mal’akhei Elyon*, 175–76, 286.

430. **ravaging bands…** As opposed to righteous indignation (“an anger ruling in the world to execute judgment”), these bands incite malevolent anger. “Ravaging bands” renders חבילין (*ḥavilin*), which derives from חבל (*ḥevel*), “band, group,” and/or the root חבל (*ḥvl*), “to injure, destroy.”

431. **the Destroyer…** The verse in Ha-bakkuk is understood as referring to this demonic power: *In anger*—that is, when the angry Destroyer is aroused—*may You remember compassion*.

432. **The second anger…** This repressed hatred, remaining silent, can lash out at any moment. It “collaborates with… the female,” stimulating Lilith to join Samael, and their malevolent union poisons the world.

433. **The third anger…** As opposed to repressed anger, this type expresses and thereby exhausts itself.

434. **The fourth anger…** Unlike the preceding anger, this one subsides even without expressing itself strongly.

435. **Second rung…** The right demonic arm, the counterpart of *Ḥesed*.

436. **executing judgment openly…** See M *Avot* 4:4, in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan son of Beroka: “Whoever profanes the name of Heaven secretly is punished openly.”

Cf. BT *Sotah* 3a, in the name of Rabbi Me'ir: "If a person commits a transgression secretly, the blessed Holy One proclaims it against him openly."

The expression האף והחמה (*ha-af ve-ha-ḥemah*), *the wrath and the fury*, appears in Deuteronomy 9:19: *I was terrified of the wrath and the fury*.... In rabbinic literature these two nouns are frequently personified as malevolent powers. See, e.g., *Targum Yerushalmi* on the verse; BT *Shabbat* 55a, *Nedarim* 32a; *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* 5:3; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* on 2:1; *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eli'ezer* 45; *Tanḥuma, Ki Tissa* 20; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Ki Tissa* 13; *Shemot Rabbah* 41:7; 44:8.

437. **beneath an aspect of one firmament...** The counterpart of *Binah*, who is sometimes described as a firmament spread over the lower *sefirot*. Red signifies harsh judgment.

438. **the third rung...** The left demonic arm, the counterpart of *Gevurah*. Each demonic arm comprises three joints, corresponding to the shoulder, elbow, and wrist. Cf. *Zohar* 1:154a, 241a; 3:142a–b (*IR*).

439. **The first joint...** The upper right arm, from the shoulder to the elbow. "The second joint" refers to the lower right arm, from the elbow to the wrist. On sacrifices assuaging demonic power, see above, note 348.

440. **This joint is called Ire...** This second joint (the lower right arm) controls the hand and fingers. When this arm of Samael joins his left arm, together they embrace Lilith, and the demonic couple inflicts all kinds of suffering upon the world. Samael and Lilith are interdependent. On Samael riding upon Lilith, see above, note 419.

441. **When Adam was in the Garden...** Samael rides the serpent, who is identified with Lilith the seductress and with the adulteress described in Proverbs: *For the lips of an alien* [or: *foreign, strange*] *woman drip honey, and her palate is smoother than oil*. Samael empowers this female

serpent, who “performs its craft in the world.” See above, notes 294, 296, 419.

The phrase “engaged in the service of his Master” apparently refers to a midrashic interpretation of Genesis 2:15: *YHVH Elohim took the human and placed him in the Garden of Eden to till it and tend it*. According to *Bereshit Rabbah* 16:5, *to till it and tend it* implies the obligation to bring sacrificial offerings. See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 41; *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 2:15; *Zohar* 1:27a (*TZ*), 57b, 141b, 199b; 2:165b; 3:263a (*Piq*); *ZḤ* 18c (*MhN*).

442. **by mystery of the offerings below…** As mentioned above (at note 439), Israel’s sacrificial offerings subdue the demonic powers. Then *Shekhinah* ascends to unite with *Tif’eret* and receive the flow of emanation from the highest *sefirot*.

443. **The third joint…** The right hand.

444. ***rage, ire, and trouble…*** The full verse reads: *He sent against them His smoldering fury, rage, ire, and trouble, a cohort of evil messengers* [or: *angels*]. In midrashic sources, *smoldering fury, rage, ire…* are applied to the plagues brought against the Egyptians by God’s hand and fingers. See *Mekhilta de-Rashbi*, Exodus 14:31; Passover Haggadah; *Shemot Rabbah* 23:9; *Midrash Tehillim* 78:15.

445. **Fourth rung…** The demonic counterpart of *Tif’eret*. This masculine potency (compared to the soul) flows to the female (compared to the body).

446. **On every single rung…** In the holy realm there are palaces of the Divine Feminine, *Shekhinah*, beneath the sefirotic rungs. Conversely, in the realm of the Other Side there are “palaces of the female” beneath the demonic rungs. On the phrase “ravaging bands,” see above, note 430.

447. **Fifth rung…** The demonic counterpart of *Netsaḥ* and *Hod*. The demonic thighs race after the wicked, overtaking and then attacking them.

448. **This rung is divided…** The right and left demonic legs each have three joints, namely the hip, knee, and ankle. All of these joints—those on the left ("these joints") and those on the right ("the joints that we have mentioned")—face "backward," away from the body. Conversely, the holy joints face "inward toward the body."

The verse in Kings describes the large bronze reservoir built by King Solomon in the Temple, which rested on twelve bronze oxen, three facing outward in each direction, with their hindquarters toward the center. See *Zohar* 1:154a, 241a.

449. **What is the difference…** The holy joints pertain to the human form and to the *sefirot*, pictured as Primordial Adam. The demonic joints pertain to the beastly form. The distinction between them is seen particularly in the middle joints. See *Or Yaqar*; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2:481; *Matoq mi-Devash*.

A sacrificial offering brought by a *human* stimulates the unification of the sefirotic *adam*. The body of the *beast* being sacrificed nourishes and assuages the beastly demonic forces. See above, note 351. Here, remarkably, the description of the oxen's *hinder parts* is applied to "mystery of *adam, human,*" as opposed to *beast*. See the preceding note; Emden, *Zohorei Ya'bets*, 60; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1:55.

450. **The first joint…** Of the demonic leg. Its malignant growth is so grotesque that it is described paradoxically as "not growing." On the phrase "demonic dazzle," see above, note 370.

451. **an angel… from the side of *Gevurah*…** See BT *Shabbat* 55a, in the name of Rabbi Aḥa son of Rabbi Ḥanina, "The blessed Holy One said to Gabriel, 'Go and set… a [letter] תיו (*tav*) of blood upon the foreheads of the wicked, so that the destroying angels may have power over them.'" See *Tanḥuma, Mishpatim* 7, *Tazri'a* 9; *Tanḥuma* (Buber), *Tazri'a* 13.

452. **those who kick their Master …** Who rebel against God by acting wickedly. The demonic forces, however, are powerless against the righteous.

453. ***YHVH delights in crushing him…*** Afflictions of the righteous come directly from God, not from demonic forces, and such "chastenings of love" are intended to test or refine the individual and increase his merit. The clause "all attains holy equilibrium" may mean that all the suffering of the righteous is balanced by their consequent refinement or ultimate reward.

On "chastenings of love," see BT *Berakhot* 5a: "Rava (some say, Rav Ḥisda) said, 'If a person sees sufferings coming upon him, he should scrutinize his actions.… If he does so and finds nothing [deserving of punishment], he should attribute it to neglecting the study of Torah.… If he does so and finds no [such neglect], then these are surely chastenings of love, as is said: *For the one whom YHVH loves He reproves, as a father the son he delights in* (Proverbs 3:12).' Rava said, in the name of Rav Saḥora, in the name of Rav Huna, 'Whomever the blessed Holy One delights in, He crushes with sufferings, as is said: *YHVH delights in crushing him by disease.*"'

See *Sifrei*, Deuteronomy 32; *Zohar* 1:180b–181a. The full verse in Isaiah reads: *YHVH delights in crushing him by disease. If you make his soul a guilt offering, he will see seed and prolong his days, and the delight of YHVH will prosper in his hand*.

454. **Sixth rung…** The demonic counterpart of *Yesod*, the divine phallus. Unlike *Yesod*, this rung is uncircumcised. Just as *Yesod* links *Tif'eret* and *Shekhinah*, this phallic rung links the demonic male (symbolized by *the elusive snake*) and the demonic female (symbolized by *the writhing snake*).

The term ערלה (*orlah*), "foreskin," also pertains to fruit. According to Leviticus 19:23, a tree's fruit must not be eaten during the first three years of growth: *When you come to the land and plant any fruit-bearing tree, you shall*

treat its foreskin with its fruit as foreskin [or: *you shall leave its fruit uncircumcised*]. *Three years it shall be foreskin* [or: *uncircumcised, forbidden*] *to you*; *it shall not be eaten*. In this verse, *foreskin* refers to the fruit enclosed in its bud; the closed bud is to plucked before its fruit emerges, leaving the fruit "uncircumcised." See Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 2:1678–80.

The phrase "unripe fruit of foreskin" refers to fruit picked from a tree before three years have passed. See BT *Pesaḥim* 25b.

The full verse in Isaiah reads: *On that day YHVH will punish—with His fierce, great, mighty sword—Leviathan the elusive snake, Leviathan the writhing snake, and He will slay the Dragon in the sea*. On Leviathan and his mate, see *Targum Yerushalmi*, Genesis 1:21; BT *Bava Batra* 74b; Isaac ben Jacob ha-Kohen, *Ma'amar al ha-Atsilut ha-Semalit*, 262–63; *Zohar* 1:34b, 46b; 2:34a–b, 108b, 176b (*SdTs*); Idel, "Livyatan u-Vat Zugo."

455. **a spirit from the side of this Foreskin…** An impure spirit of Foreskin settles upon young trees, so their fruit must not be eaten during the first three years of growth. See the preceding note.

In standard printed editions of the *Zohar* there follows here the section known as *Heikhalot* (Palaces), a description of heavenly and demonic palaces (*Zohar* 2:244b–268b). A number of early manuscripts (including N10, V18, V41) conclude *Parashat Pequdei* here without this section. The *Heikhalot* will be translated in a supplementary volume.